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# INTERVIEWS OF WITNESSES

BEFORE THE  
SELECT COMMITTEE ON  
THE EVENTS SURROUNDING  
THE 2012 TERRORIST  
ATTACK IN BENGHAZI  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, 2012–2016

VOLUME 3 OF 11

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# **INTERVIEW OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #1**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 6, 2015

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## APPEARANCES

### FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

DANA CHIPMAN, *Chief Counsel*  
SHARON JACKSON, *Deputy Chief Counsel*  
CARLTON DAVIS, *Counsel*  
SARA BARRINEAU, *Investigator*  
SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*  
HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*  
PETER KENNY, *Minority Senior Counsel*

FOR MR. \* \* \*

RAEKA SAFAI

### FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*

Ms. Jackson. Good morning.

This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED] conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi.

This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and matters related to it pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

The committee appreciates your appearance here today, Mr. [REDACTED]. Could we have you state your full name for the record, please.

Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Ms. Jackson. And would you spell your first and last name for the official reporter, please.

Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and the last name is [REDACTED]

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Well, Mr. [REDACTED], again good morning. My name is Sharon Jackson. We met a little earlier today, and I'm a member of the committee's majority staff. I understand that you are here present with your counsel today. Who is your counsel?

Mr. [REDACTED] Counsel is Raeka Safai.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. And I have the spelling of that name as R-a-e-k-a, S-a-f-a-i. Is that correct?

Ms. Safai. Correct.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Agent [REDACTED] I also notice at the table is Mr. Austin Evers, who is counsel with the State Department. Is he here at your personal request today?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, I wanted him.

Ms. Jackson. Okay, all right. But Ms. Safai is here as your counsel. Is that correct?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. And you understand the distinction between Mr. Evers' role as counsel to the State Department and your own personal counsel?

Mr. [REDACTED] I do.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. And they've taken time to talk to you about that and those kind of things?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay, all right. As we do in all of these interviews, I'm going to have everyone go around the table and introduce themselves, and I will start to my left with Mr. Chipman.

Mr. Chipman. Dana Chipman. We met out in the hallway. I'm the chief counsel for the majority side of the committee.

Ms. Barrineau. I'm Sara Barrineau. I'm with the majority staff.

Ms. Clarke. Sheria Clarke, majority staff.

Ms. Jackson. And then we'll go to your lawyer, just to --

Ms. Safai. Sure, Raeka Safai.

Mr. Evers. Austin Evers, State Department.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer chief counsel for the Democrat members of the committee.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny, minority staff.

Mr. Davis. And I'm Carlton Davis, and I work for Mr. Gowdy.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Agent [REDACTED] before we again today, I just want to lay out the ground rules and the procedure that we're going to follow today.

How this will occur today is that questioning will occur in one-hour rounds. First myself, perhaps Mr. Davis, or any member of the majority staff will ask you questions for up to an hour. Then we will change places, and the minority staff, either Ms. Sawyer or Mr. Kenny or perhaps both of them, will question you for up to an hour.

In our procedures, questions can only be asked by a Member of Congress, a member of this committee, or a member of their staff. So no one else is permitted to ask you questions today. We may have a Member of Congress that's assigned to this committee join us at some point today, and if so, we generally allow them whatever leeway they want in asking questions. And so that's the general process that we will follow.

We will also take a break, usually at the end of the first hour and at the end of the second hour, but if at any time you need a break, you want another cup of coffee -- feel free to add cream and sugar to that if you need it. But if you need a comfort break at all or need a moment to confer with your counsel, we'll be happy to go off the record and take a break whenever you would like it. So just please ask, and then we will accommodate you in that manner.

Unlike testimony in Federal court that you may be familiar with, the committee's format is not as rigid and structured. We are not bound

by the rules of evidence, so hearsay, opinion, those kind of matters, are admissible and may be inquired upon during our interview today. There are only rare times that there is any type of objection. The only one that the chairman of the committee is likely to consider would be one of privilege, and it is up to the chairman to decide whether or not to have the question answered notwithstanding a claim of privilege. Again, rarely comes up, but just want to let you know that those are the essentially non-evidentiary rules that we go by in this setting.

As we currently sit here, we are in an unclassified setting. We have arrangements for a classified setting for the afternoon, and so what we're going to do is ask a series of questions that we believe will elicit only unclassified information. If you think that any one of our questions delves into classified matters, please just say so, and we will withdraw it at the time and either just withdraw it altogether or reserve it and ask it when we move to a classified setting later today.

Again, you are here with counsel, and you are welcome to confer with your counsel whenever you need to or you choose, and, again, just let us know if you need to do that.

If at any time you don't understand a question or miss part of it, please just ask that we restate it or rephrase it in some way because, as you know, it's just as important to understand the question as it is for us to understand your answers. So no matter who's asking the questions, if you just would like it restated, broken down into



if it's a compound question, just let us know and we'll be happy to do that.

As you can see, we have an official reporter taking down everything that is being said today so that we will have a written record of this interview. One of the things that we have probably not been very good at is not talking over each other during the course of these interviews, so to the best of our abilities, and I'm just as guilty of this as anyone, is that I will sometimes start asking a question before you've finished with an answer with a follow-up. I will do my best to not interrupt your answer in any way. And if we can all just be conscious of letting one person finish before we start with another, that would make the official reporter very, very happy.

We are going to ask you questions from a time that is nearly four years ago, and we understand very well that memories fade over time. We are asking you to give us your best recollection. So if you remember part but not all, we ask that you give us the part that you do know. And we will sometimes follow-up and say, you know, well, if you don't have a recollection of this particular event, were there others present that you do recall being there, just so that we can get a full accounting of what happened. But obviously if you just don't remember something, just please say so, and we fully understand that.

You are appearing before a congressional committee this morning. Do you understand that you have to answer the questions from Congress truthfully?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Good. And do you understand that applies to this committee as well as Congress as a whole?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. You're a Federal law enforcement agent. I'm sure you well understand that providing false testimony before a congressional committee could subject you to a potential prosecution for perjury or making false statements. Do you understand that?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Is there any reason as you sit here today that you feel you would not be able to give truthful questions to the questions that are posed to you today?

Mr. [REDACTED] No.

Ms. Jackson. Okay, well, that's the end of my preamble. I keep trying to shorten it. It never goes any shorter. Does the minority have anything that they would like to add?

Ms. Sawyer. Yes. Just briefly. Good morning. Thank you for being with us.

It's our understanding, and two requests were conveyed by Mr. [REDACTED] counsel, Ms. Safai. One was for -- well, three total. One was to hold the entire interview in a classified setting to make it a little easier for her client not to have to police the line between information that might be classified or not. The ranking member certainly supported that request and continues to support that request. We don't think -- we can get a full, fair and better accounting if we do it in the classified setting and that we need not put that additional burden

on the witness. So we would like to, if it's supported by everyone, just go ahead and proceed in the classified setting at this point.

The second request was for, from the witness' perspective and his attorney for the State Department to be present. We do appreciate the decision to accommodate that request. That was also one that the ranking member supported, and then finally, both Mr. [REDACTED] lawyer and the Department of Justice independently did request to have present here a representative from the FBI and the Justice Department just to be able to make sure that they could help us avoid things that might negatively impact on those law enforcement efforts. Again, the ranking member fully supported that request, thinks it's very important and critical that we not do anything that would possibly risk the efforts to bring the attackers here to justice.

Again we hope -- they are not here today because they were told that request was denied by the chairman. We hope that the chairman going forward will revisit that. And we do just want to enter for the record the letter requesting that from the Department of Justice so that this can be part of this transcript as well. So I will give you guys a copy of that.

I don't know if we need to formally mark it as an exhibit for you. I don't know if you had the opportunity to see that.

Ms. Jackson. Anything else, Ms. Sawyer?

Ms. Sawyer. I assume we'll just proceed in the unclassified setting for now?

Ms. Jackson. Yes, we are going to proceed in an unclassified

setting.

Ms. Sawyer. But we do have the ability to --

Ms. Jackson. All those arrangements have been made.

Yes, we are going to proceed in an unclassified setting for at least the first one-hour rounds by each side.

The time now is 11:40, and so I will begin the first hour.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Agent [REDACTED] again thank you very much for being here today. We understand that testifying before a congressional committee is probably not high on your list, or probably never on your bucket list of things to do, but we do appreciate your being here today and your service as a Federal law enforcement agent with the Diplomatic Security.

You have a very serious job that you do extraordinarily well, and we appreciate your service and your appearance here today. So thank you very much.

A Thank you for having me.

Q Agent [REDACTED] when did you join the Diplomatic Security?

A [REDACTED] 2011.

Q Okay. And did you have any prior military or law enforcement experience before you became a special agent with Diplomatic Security?

A I had prior military experience.

Q Okay. And could you summarize that for us, please?

A So I had 8 years of active duty experience. Joined the Army in 1996. I spent the majority of that time as an explosive ordnance disposal technician [REDACTED], providing support to Secret Service and other agencies as far as rendering safe explosives and other things like that.

After that, I spent time in the National Guard for about 3 years. And I left the service in 2004. After leaving the service in 2004, I spent time contracting for the DOD until I joined the State Department in 2011.

Q And as a contractor for DOD, did you deal with issues regarding explosives?

A Yes, I did. So I spent 2 years working in Iraq, almost 2 years, less than 2 years in Iraq, working on a captured enemy ammunition project for the Corps of Engineers travelling around the country. Then I spent time working for an intel agency called Counter-IED Operations Integration Center.

Q Could you say that a little slower please?

A Counter-IED Operations Integration Center, called COIC. So I worked for them for 3 years, spent time with them in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Iraq, I worked for them as a liaison to Special Operations. In Afghanistan, I was a liaison [REDACTED] and an advisor to the Combat Brigade there. And currently I'm still in the service. I'm an intelligence officer in the Navy.

Q So you're in a reserve status with the Navy?

A Yes, I am.

Q Okay. And how often do you have an active deployment with the Navy?

A I haven't, not in the 4 years I've been with the Navy.

Q Okay. All right. Since you joined Diplomatic Security Service, can you run through your various assignments that you've had with them?

A After completing training, I'd say sometime around October, November of 2011, I was at the [REDACTED] field office. There we're just domestically assigned investigating visa fraud and passport fraud, until I went to Libya for a 60-day TDY.

Q And when did you first go to Libya?

A Three weeks prior to the event, so I arrived in Tripoli, I believe, the second week in August.

Q So somewhere around the 10th to the 15th of August, or the 10th to the 20th of August?

A I believe so.

Q Okay. How did you learn about the temporary assignment in Libya?

A Well, there was a message asking for volunteers, and then if you wanted to volunteer you would go through your chain of command, through your supervisor.

Q So there was a like Diplomatic Security-wide announcement that went out saying we need people to go to Libya?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what interested you about going over there?

A Well, it was an opportunity to actually do the job of a Regional Security Officer, as assistant Regional Security Officer, seeing as I was doing investigations at the field office, and down the line I was looking at going and serving at a post overseas. And ideally I wanted to serve in a high-threat post as my first one, so I viewed Libya as a good place to, you know, learn the ropes with the State Department.

Q And Libya was considered a high-threat post at the time. Is that correct?

A I believe so, yes.

Q Okay had you --

A Well, it wasn't a high-threat post because there was no high threat at the time. It was just everyone understood it was a higher threat as far as whatever was on the critical -- terrorism, critical crime, those types of things.

Q Okay. So when they ranked Libya, it ranked high on having a lot of security risks about it?

A I would say, that yes.

Q Okay. It's your understanding that since that time, there is an actual designation that's been created called high-threat posts?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did you have any specialized high threat training before you went over?

A Yes, I went through the high-threat course.

Q And when did you do that?

A I believe that was earlier that year. Exact date -- it may have been May, May of 2012.

Q 2012 or 2011?

A I can't remember. It may have been 2012 --

Q Okay.

A -- 2012.

Q Okay. And how long was that course when you took it?

A Five weeks.

Q Okay. And where did you take that course?

A At our training center in West Virginia.

Q Okay. And what were the various subject matters that you were trained on during the high-threat course?

A High-risk protection, tactical medicine, some planning, communications, weapons fire, those things, as far as I can recall right now.

Q Prior to going to -- well, let me back up. When you went to Libya, did you go to Tripoli first?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Your assignment was to be in Tripoli?

A Yes, it was.

Q Okay. Was it your understanding that you were to be in Tripoli the entire time of your temporary assignment?

A Well, that's where I was going to be assigned, but I didn't



understand if I was going to go to, you know, depending, you may have to go TDY, Benghazi, something like that. I didn't rule that out.

Q Okay.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q Quick question about your training prior to Libya. Did you undergo any type of other specialized training other than your high-threat training?

A In my career?

Q Yes, at DS.

A Oh, for DS? Yes, I've gone through -- well, as far as investigative training, yes. I went through a high-threat firearms course, which is 3 days of intensive firearms training.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And you did that in conjunction with the high- threat tactical course?

A After.

Q After?

A Yeah, I believe it may have been after. After the tactical course, yes.

Q Were either of those courses a requirement to go to Libya?

A Yes, the high-threat course, the 5-week course was a requirement to go there.

Q But the weapons course was not necessarily a requirement to go there?

A No, it was not.

Q Okay. Do you know if I say that there's something called FACT training, do you know what I'm talking about?

A Uh-huh.

Q Foreign Affairs Counterterrorism Training?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Is that something that agents --

A The Center -- sorry go ahead.

Q Go through?

A It's not a requirement if you've gone through high-threat training. That's more for the Foreign Service officers.

Q And is it more of a condensed version, or is it a substantially different type of training than what you go through in DS?

A It is. It is. I think that's more of a -- so people, Foreign Service officers have a general understanding of what to expect in that type of environment. Where in high threat, we're trained to perform in that environment, so there are checkmarks that you have to hit. You have to be able to do the tactical medicine, the live-fire training, all of those things.

Q In your preparation to go to Libya, did you know whether the Foreign Service officers were required to undergo the FACT training to be in Libya?

A Not that I can remember. I don't know.

Q Okay. Once you were there, did you learn whether the Foreign Service officers had undergone any type of FACT training in

order to serve in Libya?

A It's not something I paid attention to as far as what the Foreign Service officers' training was, no.

Q Okay. Okay. Did you know any of the other agents who were serving in Libya or going to be over there at the -- let me ask this in three different parts.

Did you know any of the other Diplomatic Security agents who had served in either Benghazi or Tripoli, were going to be there when you were there? And there was a third, but it's escaped my mind at the time. So we'll just start with there. Did you know anybody who either had been in Libya before doing a TDY or was going to serve when you were there?

A Yes, I did.

Q Okay. And who were those individuals?

A Okay. I had three friends that went through basic special agent training with me that were there prior to me. [REDACTED] (phonetic).

Q I'm sorry, the last name?

A His name is [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] (phonetic).

Q And were any of them going to be there when you were there?

A No.

Q So they had all completed?

A They would all be leaving probably a month before I arrived.

And I know [REDACTED] who was in Benghazi. I knew him. He

was in my basic special agent training as well. And [REDACTED] was in the [REDACTED] field office with me, and he also attended that 3-day firearms course with me as well.

Q And had he completed that course before he went to Libya?

A Yes, he did.

Q Okay. Did you talk with them prior to deciding whether to do the TDY or at any time prior to your departure for Libya about what they experienced and basically what you would be getting yourself -- what you would be exposed to over there?

A Yes, I did.

Q Okay. And can you describe for us the nature of those conversations, and with whom did you have them?

A I believe I spoke to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. And they would just give me a general rundown of their daily duties, what they were doing day-to-day, essentially.

Q Let me ask this. Were they in Tripoli or Benghazi?

A They were in Tripoli. I hadn't spoken to anyone that was in Benghazi, so it was mostly just the Tripoli agents that I knew.

Q Anything else that they told you before you went over?

A Nothing that stands out.

Q When you arrived in Libya, can you describe for us the number of Diplomatic Security agents there and other security personnel that were present to protect the foreign officers and others in Tripoli?

A When I arrived, I would say there were -- give me a second -- there were between five and seven agents. If you give me

a second, I would be able to give you everyone's name. I actually did know one other person, [REDACTED]. He went through training with me as well, so I knew him.

Q And he was in Tripoli when you arrived?

A He was in Tripoli.

Q Okay.

A Yeah so, seven DS agents that I can remember.

Q Including yourself or in addition to yourself?

A In addition to me. No, it nine. I'm sorry. So it was nine agents.

Q Okay.

A To the best of my memory it was nine agents, including me.

Q Including you. Okay. Who was the RSO?

A [REDACTED]

Q So he was the RSO when you arrived?

A Yes.

Q Was he the RSO the entire time that you were there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Of the nine of you -- and is [REDACTED] one of the nine?

A Yes.

Q Did the nine of you all remain in Libya during your entire TDY, or did some come and go?

A I believe one of the assistant RSOs, [REDACTED], I don't think he was there when I arrived. So correction on that. He came

in maybe a week later, I believe. And some people were transitioning out. Exactly who at what time I don't know. There was, I think his last name was [REDACTED] (phonetic); I don't know if he was leaving or he was preparing to leave. There was [REDACTED] (phonetic); he was preparing to leave. There were some of them that may have left. I don't know. It's fuzzy.

Q Did the complement of agents remain pretty steady at nine in Tripoli during the time that you were there?

A Yes, I believe so.

Q Were there other security forces or personnel in Tripoli when you arrived, such as an MSD team or SST team from the Department of Defense?

A Yes, there was the MSD team. So add that to the number. There were two gentlemen, so that's 11 agents there.

Q So there were just two members of MSD that were there in addition to the complement of nine DS agents?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was there any SST support when you arrived in Tripoli?

A Yes, there was four, four SST team members there.

Q Was it your understanding that there had been additional MSD or SST personnel in Tripoli prior to your arrival?

A Yes.

Q Okay. What was your understanding of that?

A With the SST team, for, I'm not sure exactly the reasons,

but I know they weren't permitted to stay, from what I understand. So there was some debate whether they were going to stay and in what numbers, but the majority of team left. I believe they were up to maybe 12 at their highest.

Q When you say that there was a debate, who was having that debate?

A I would say it was between State and the DOD.

Q Do you know who at the Embassy in Tripoli was involved in that debate?

A The Ambassador.

Q And was that Chris Stevens?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And do you know who from DOD would have been involved in that debate?

A No.

Q Okay. Was there a similar conversation or debate regarding MSD teams remaining in Tripoli?

A No, not that I know of.

Q I had a couple more questions regarding prior to your going into Libya. Were you given any type of briefings, security briefings, or cultural -- you know, about the Libyan culture or anything like that prior to going in, or did you do any type of self-study regarding the security situation in Libya prior to going in?

A There was a -- so the regional desk officer, [REDACTED], I believe he put out an email or it may have been [REDACTED] that sent

me an email that outlined some of the different events that happened in Tripoli and Benghazi. Some of the threats and some of the actual incidents that had happened.

Q Okay. So you took a look at those?

A Yes.

Q Was there any other type of information that you reviewed prior to going over to Libya?

A Just, I may have researched generally just the overall dynamic of what was happening in Libya, you know, between trying to look it up on S.gov or even just general open source, you know, even Wikipedia, reading up on Benghazi -- or I mean, Libya in general.

Q Wikipedia, the thing everybody goes to first.

A I know, it's great.

Q Yeah.

A It's awesome. Take it with a grain of salt though.

Q That's right. Did you receive any post-specific training or specialized equipment, either personal protection. I'm not going to know all the correct agent terms, you know weapons or anything -- was there anything different about either your training or the gear that you took over with you to Libya?

A So you mean was there different gear than what I was trained on?

Q Or that you were using at the [REDACTED] field office as an agent?

A No. I would say it was consistent with what we have in the



inventory.

Q And were you required to bring your own, I think it's called SPE -- SPE or -- do I have that right?

A You say PPE, personal protection equipment?

Q Yes.

A SPE would be my handgun, and I wasn't allowed to take that.

Q Okay. So were weapons provided to you once you --

A Once I arrived, there were weapons there.

Q What type of weapons were there when you arrived?

A M4s, Sig 9 millimeters, Glocks, shotgun.

Q Okay. Any higher level of guns such as machine guns or anything like that?

A No, not that I remember.

Q Okay. What about your personal protection equipment? Did you take that with you, or was that awaiting you when you arrived in Libya?

A No. I took some of my gear, my personal gear.

Q Okay. Was there additional gear available for you in Libya?

A Yes, there was.

Q And what type of additional gear was available for you there?

A Vests, helmets, pouches, holsters.

Q Were the vests and the helmets different or more enhanced than what you were used to?

A It was just the same, generally the same, yeah.

Q Thank you. Okay, I believe you've mentioned before that you knew [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] prior to going over to Libya. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And were you aware that they were assigned to Benghazi when you went over?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were they present in Benghazi at the time you arrived in Tripoli?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did you know any of the other agents who were in Benghazi?

A [REDACTED].

Q You knew him?

A Because he was in Tripoli prior to -- so when I arrived in Tripoli, Alec was there. And then I believe a week prior to the event he had went TDY to Benghazi.

Q Okay. And was he to remain in Benghazi for the remainder of his TDY?

A I don't believe so.

Q He was just going there for a specific purpose?

A I believe so.

Q And did you -- No those were the three --

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q Just briefly, you mentioned that in addition to the DS agents, that there were two MSD personnel and the four SST personnel in Tripoli when you arrived?

A As far as I remember, yes.

Q Did any of those four SST personnel depart during your time in Tripoli?

A I believe the person in charge, I don't know if he was a Major or a Lieutenant Colonel, but I believe he may have transitioned out.

Q And did any of the two MSD personnel that were there when you arrived depart during your time in Tripoli?

A I can't remember.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q When you arrived in Libya, what was the general security situation in and around, let's first go with Tripoli and then broader?

A General security. Tripoli seemed to be a little bit, somewhat stable. You know, I know there were some incidents at the airport that would routinely happen, but it seemed safe enough to move around.

Q And did the Ambassador move around fairly freely in Tripoli?

A Yeah, he did.

Q And when the Ambassador would travel around Tripoli, would you be one of the individuals that would be part of his protection detail?

A No. Routinely they would have the AIC.

Q Agent in charge?

A Agent in charge.

Q Yes.

A And then you would have his -- there would be a QRF in town usually, and those are Libyans. [REDACTED] I actually did go out one time; but that wasn't for the Ambassador's detail. I was just on a QRF, and that was general security for anyone who was in town from mission.

But at some point while I was there during that 3 weeks that stopped where it would just be Libyans on the QRF.

Q So the Ambassador would -- I just want to make sure I have this correct. The Ambassador would always have an agent with him. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q But when other members of the Embassy's team, the other Foreign Service officers, would travel around Tripoli, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]?

A No.

Q They would have the Libyan QRF, which is the quick response force members?

A Yeah. Not with them, but [REDACTED] within town to be able to respond.

Q To your knowledge, was that different for the Embassy folks that were in Benghazi? Did they have a different structure? Prior to your going to Benghazi, were you aware?

A No. I don't know.

Q Okay. Were there security threats to the Ambassador while you were in Tripoli?

A I believe they were just general threats. We had two instances, I believe, of I would say surveillance, not necessarily the Ambassador, but -- and the details -- I can't remember the exact details, but there was a time where he was possibly being surveilled in Tripoli.

Q Okay. Was that when he was running?

A I've heard about that one. That was prior to. And when I arrived, he had to stop running outside the compound.

Q Tell us what you know about that, what you were told and what was changed.

A Well, that he would routinely run with an agent outside of the Special Mission, or the Embassy grounds, the CMR, so he would go running outside. And I know everyone had a bit of an issue with that as far as for safety reasons. So I believe he stopped.

Q Okay. And you said there were two surveillance-type security incidents in and around Tripoli while you were there. Is that correct?

A Yes. Outside of the CMR or outside of the Embassy there were some local kids playing. And I can't remember the make and model of the vehicle, but someone asked if those children, had the Ambassador driven through to the Embassy. So that was one. And then there was another one going into the CMR, but the details I can't remember.

Q And were any changes instituted as a result of those potential surveillance incidents?

A Specific ones, I can't remember now.

Q Okay. Prior to your going to Benghazi, were you aware of security incidents that occurred in Benghazi? I guess were they being reported through Tripoli or just in conversation with the -- I mean in casual conversation with the agents, did you learn of any security incidents in Benghazi?

A Yeah, I know of the major events that happened. There was an attack on the wall. Someone threw an explosive at the wall. I knew about that one and a few other nonspecific ones. But anything besides that I can't remember now.

Q Okay. Was there a lot of communication back and forth between the agents in Benghazi and the agents in Tripoli during the time that you were there?

A I believe so. I mean, I know everything was relayed to the RSO, and then any information we had gleaned was picked up in conversation between the agents. We routinely talk about everything, whatever was happening as far as -- that was of value.

Q Okay. You routinely did talk about things of value. Is that correct?

A Uh-huh.

Q Okay. And did you have more casual conversations with the agents that you knew on a more personal level that were assigned to Benghazi?

A As far as casually, just day-to-day, home, family, those things?

Q Yes.

A I would say so.

Q Okay. And how would that conversation take place? Would that be through email? Would that be on phone? Instant message? What was the mode of communication?

A So you mean my conversations with the agents in Benghazi?

Q Yes.

A Oh, no, I did not. I'm sorry. I did not.

Q You did not. Then what were you talking about?

A To the agents in Benghazi or in Tripoli?

Q Your answer before was the agents in Tripoli?

A Yeah.

Q Okay. So to be clear, you and the other agents in Tripoli talked routinely about security incidents that --

A Yes.

Q -- occurred --

A Yes.

Q -- both in Tripoli and in Benghazi?

A If there was something that needed to be brought up to anyone's attention, yeah, we would talk about it. But mainly we were talking about the day-to-day in Tripoli.

Q Yeah. Prior to going to Benghazi with the Ambassador on September 10, had you gone to Benghazi before?

A No.

Q Okay. Was there -- did anyone else from your team, other than [REDACTED], go to Benghazi?

A Before?

Q Yes.

A [REDACTED] had not, and the Ambassador. So he had been there prior to.

Q [REDACTED] had or had not?

A He had not. He had not been there.

Q He had not. Any other DS agent that was assigned to Tripoli, had they gone to Benghazi before?

A Yes. [REDACTED], he had been to Benghazi before.

Q Okay. What, if anything, did you know about the sufficiency of the number of DS personnel that were in Benghazi prior to September 10?

A I knew that there were three agents there.

Q Was there any conversation among the agents as to whether that was a sufficient number or not, or was there any request for additional security support, DS agents in Benghazi prior to your going there on the 10th?

A Not that I can remember, no.

Q Did you know about any request for additional physical security upgrades that were being made for additional support in Benghazi?

A While I was in Tripoli?



Q Yes.

A No.

Q Okay. How about prior to going to Tripoli?

A No.

Q Okay. Were there any physical security upgrades requested for Tripoli while you were there?

A Not that I can remember, no.

Q While you were in Tripoli, did it have an exfiltration or evacuation plan?

A It was in development. So the TDY agents were tasked with developing an EAP, emergency action plan, and [REDACTED] was the one working on that while I was there, and then that transitioned to [REDACTED].

Q And was it completed while you were still there?

A Not that I can remember, no.

Q Okay. Were you aware of whether or not Benghazi had an exfiltration or evacuation plan?

A A formal one, I don't know.

Q Okay. Did it have an informal one?

A While we were there we discussed what the emergency action plan would be.

Q After you arrived in Benghazi?

A After I arrived in Benghazi, yes.

Q Okay. We'll get to that then in a little bit. I'll save that question, that logical follow-up question, for a little bit later.

A Let's just talk about the emergency action plan.

Q Okay.

A There was an older one that they were revising that had been developed but they were revising.

Ms. Safai. In Tripoli?

A In Tripoli. And they were revising that one. And that revision was being done by [REDACTED] and then [REDACTED].

Q Okay.

A So there was a plan, yes.

Q It was considered to be updated or needed to be reassessed in some way?

A Yes.

Q And you were in the process of doing that?

A Yes.

Q Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi, do you know if they had a formal plan that perhaps needed to be updated, too?

A I don't know.

Q Okay. To your knowledge, did the Ambassador carry any type of personal GPS tracker with him when he moved around? Well, did he carry one with him?

A Yes. Yeah, a locator.

Q Okay.

Ms. Sawyer. I'm just going to say a couple of the questions that have been asked about some of the details I trust are not getting into classified information. But I would just say let's tread carefully,

particularly about the movements of the Ambassador and other State employees about the Ambassador in this setting. We can certainly ask all of those questions when we move to the classified setting.

Ms. Jackson. Well, just for the record, I'm confident that all of this has been discussed within State Department records that have been deemed unclassified by them. And I would anticipate that I would say that if the State Department has not sought to classify that information, then we are free to talk about it in this setting.

Mr. Davis. Sharon, we have also had discussions on the Ambassador's movements and other individuals' movements with previous witnesses with State Department counsel present and there has been no objection.

Ms. Sawyer. That's fine. Is it our protocol that the State Department will have an opportunity to review transcripts? Just to remind me --

Ms. Jackson. We can talk about that during the break, yeah.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q So was it your understanding that the Ambassador carried the personal tracker with him at all times?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Tell us about how you first learned that you would be going to Benghazi with the Ambassador in September of 2012.

A I knew there was a trip tentatively planned. At some point there was a request to send an agent, or they were going to send an additional agent down to support because, again, there were only three

agents in Benghazi.

So one additional agent, I believe, to either sit in the command center in Benghazi or help with movements. So the AIC at the time was [REDACTED], and then that transitioned to [REDACTED]. So with [REDACTED], I can't remember how it came about, but one of them came to me and said, hey, would you be interested in going to Benghazi.

Q You called them the AIC?

A Agent in charge.

Q Was that not [REDACTED] or do I have their roles --

A [REDACTED] is the Regional Security Officer. He's the RSO. The agent in charge is that closed protection agent with the Ambassador.

Q So sort of head of the personal protection detail?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And who was that first?

A It was -- I think we were transitioning every week, so at one point it was [REDACTED], when I first heard that they may want to go to Benghazi. Then it was [REDACTED], and I believe he had been the agent in charge for maybe a week.

Q Okay. And was this the week prior to going to Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q So that would have been around the 1st of September?

A I believe so.

Q Okay. And what are the roles and responsibilities of the agent in charge?

A As far as everything, all movements related to the

Ambassador and safety, he's responsible for those things. As far as making sure that -- so you don't really have a shift lead, so you'd have the AIC, so with that AIC he would make sure that he advances or the Libyans give him the timely information as far as what safety and security look like in whatever the venue they were going to and that the route was planned sufficiently, and that he maintained a close personal protection on the Ambassador.

Q Okay. And the AIC would also determine how many vehicles needed to travel with the Ambassador?

A In conjunction with the RSO. If he felt they needed more vehicles, he would coordinate that with the RSO to get additional support if needed.

Q And when is it that you first learned then that -- how many days before you left for Benghazi did you know that you would be going?

A I don't remember. It may have been 2 days, but again, that's 2 and a half years ago.

Q Were you aware that [REDACTED] was going to go?

A Yes.

Q I believe that what you said was that initially you thought it would just be one agent that was going?

A It may have been just [REDACTED]. I think at that point we were moving to a new week, and I was supposed to take over duties as AIC, but since we were going to Benghazi, we decided to leave -- they decided to leave [REDACTED] as the AIC since he had already been with the Ambassador for a week.

Q And at what point was it determined that two agents were going to travel with the Ambassador from Tripoli to Benghazi?

A May have been 2 days. May have been 3. I can't remember.

Q Do you know why that determination was made?

A Probably the agents in Benghazi asked for additional agents. I mean, they would have been the ones to decide whether they had enough support or not. You know, that may have been their call. I don't know.

Q You were not part of those discussions at all?

A No.

Q Would [REDACTED] have been part of those discussions?

A No. That may have been the RSO.

Q That would have been [REDACTED]?

A It would have been [REDACTED].

Q Would [REDACTED] have been part of those discussions?

A Yes.

Q Now, you said [REDACTED] had gone to Benghazi several days before the Ambassador traveled there. Is that correct?

A I believe so. I believe it was a week.

Q A week?

A Yeah, I believe so.

Q And do you know was he to remain in Benghazi just for the Ambassador's trip and then come back, or was he going to finish his TDY out in Benghazi?

A I don't know. I can't remember. I can't remember.

Q Was his purpose in going there to help prepare for the Ambassador's trip?

A I don't believe so. I believe he was there to act as the ARSO and then rotate. I believe [REDACTED] may have been the next one up to go replace [REDACTED]. So on this day the assigned RSOs in Tripoli, I believe they may have been rotating or decided to start rotating to Benghazi.

Q Okay. So your understanding is that [REDACTED] -- is that his correct pronunciation of his last name?

A [REDACTED].

Q [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were two ARSOs assigned to Tripoli, and they were rotating back and forth with assignments in Benghazi?

A As far as I can remember.

Q Okay. I just want to make sure that I understood your answer.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q I want to go back for a second to your time in Tripoli. You mentioned that you did not serve on the Ambassador's protection detail during any of his movements in the city. Is that correct?

A No, I did. I was on the shift lead on move out of the city. So we were going to -- I can't remember the location. It was the opening of an office at a different town, so I was there with the Libyan guard, and I was the shift leader.

Q Okay. Is that the only time that you served on his close

protection detail, or were there other times when you were in Tripoli?

A As far as I can remember, that was the only time that I was with the Ambassador, yeah.

Q So that was the only time you were with the Ambassador. And then the week you went to Benghazi, you were scheduled to rotate and to be the AIC of his protective detail. Is that right?

A Yes, but that was delayed because we were going to Benghazi. Had we stayed in Tripoli I would have become the AIC.

Q So you have the AIC. How many people are under the AIC on the Ambassador's protective detail when you were in Tripoli?

A So you would have the advances, and then if there was -- you know, say, there was a follow car, then whatever Libyan bodyguards were there, he would be in charge of all those people.

Q So was it a DS agent in the follow car, or was it simply the Libyans in the follow car?

A Depends.

Q Depends. And how many people normally served on an advance team?

A More than likely one. There would be one Libyan.

Q Now, were you ever on an advance team for one of the Ambassador's movements in Tripoli?

A Not that I can remember.

Q So what was your role, your day-to-day role when you were in Tripoli in the 2 or 3 weeks that you were there prior to going to Benghazi?



A Augment where we were needed. So if we were needed to work in the -- we ended up doing a lot of time in the command post, working shifts at the command post. I ran exercise, emergency reaction drill, more like a duck and cover exercise. I was the shift lead on one movement.

And then also went out one time with the QRF, the Quick Reaction Force, located -- where we stayed [REDACTED] to respond to any movements that are out from Chief of Mission personnel.

Q Was there a name of a group where the QRF was pulled from, or did you just know them as the QRF? I guess my question is, was there a militia that the RSO had contracted with? Who were the QRF individuals?

A Our QRF?

Q Yes.

A These were our Libyan bodyguards.

Q Your Libyan bodyguards.

A Who worked for Embassy.

Q Okay, and to the best of your knowledge, they had been vetted and gone through the proper process for QRFs?

A To my knowledge, yes.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did you have any understanding as to the QRF that was in Benghazi?

A You mean the one owned by the Embassy, the Libyan guards, or are you talking about the QRF on the Supreme Security Council?

Q The QRF that were working in the Benghazi facility, U.S. facility.

Ms. Safai. I'm sorry, what's the question again?

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Were you aware that there was a QRF contingent assigned in Benghazi to that facility?

A Prior to going?

Q Yes.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And were they part -- do you know, were they part of the militia or were they direct hires of the facility in Benghazi?

A They were contracted.

Q Do you know whether they were part of a militia?

A I don't remember.

Q Does the term Feb 17th Brigade ring any bells?

A It does.

Q Okay. And what, if anything, do you recall about the February 17th Brigade?

A I do remember that distinctly when I arrived on the way to the Special Mission I was given a lot of these details. And that's where it stands out. I may have heard the term in Tripoli, I don't know.

Yeah, but I was told these things. So I was briefed on the QRF, the militia, on our way from the airport to the Embassy.

Q Had you been part of any of the planning or briefings prior

to the day you traveled to Benghazi?

A I had a meeting with the Ambassador the day prior to where we discussed what was supposed to happen, what was the schedule possibly going to be like. Yes, I was part of that.

Q Okay. So that would have been on September 9th?

A Yes.

Q You traveled on the 10th. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And can you describe for us that meeting that you had with the Ambassador on the 9th, who was present, what were the topics, issues that were discussed?

A Most vivid is myself, the Ambassador, [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and I can't recall who else.

Q Was Greg Hicks present?

A I can't recall.

Q Okay. And what were the issues that were discussed during your meeting?

A His possible itinerary, limiting his exposure as far as media, try to maintain most of the meetings on the compound so we didn't have to do a lot of external movements.

Q And why was that a concern?

A Security reasons just because it would be harder, especially with the footprint, the amount of agents that we had to be able to effectively secure him outside of the Embassy -- or, I mean the Special Mission.

Q During this meeting, did you have a conference call or communicate in any way with [REDACTED] or others who were physically present in Benghazi?

A I did not.

Q Okay. So they weren't on a phone, conference call-type phone?

A Not that I remember, no.

Q Do you know if anyone had talked with them prior? Did anyone during the meeting, say, [REDACTED], suggests X or something like, to that effect?

A I don't know. I can't remember.

Q What, if any, concerns were there -- if there were concerns, what were they about either the number of meetings the Ambassador wanted to have, or the location of meetings, to the best of your recollection?

A The main concern was being off of the Special Mission. And again, the biggest issue was limiting his exposure as far as media. So I think the day prior to our -- we were scheduled to go back to Tripoli from Benghazi. He had an event, and that's where we kind of agreed that the media would be part of that since that would be a pretty public event so --

Q So it was as scheduled was just the day before you were to depart was going to be his only media event?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And do you recall what that event was to be?

A It is the opening of an American corner. I believe it was

at the university.

Q Okay. And what's an American corner?

A It's an area where you can -- live-ins can go and read American literature.

Q Okay. Now, you said that you had gotten some additional information, discussions, briefings on your way to Benghazi on the 10th. Is that correct?

A When I arrived in Benghazi on the 10th.

Q All right. Tell us how you and Agent [REDACTED] and the Ambassador actually traveled to Benghazi. Plane, train, automobile?

A So we took a plane from Tripoli.

Q Was it a commercial airline?

A Yes. Afriqiyah, I believe, so Afriqiyah Airlines to Benghazi.

Q And then were you met at the airport by other agents?

A We were met by two agents.

Q Were they augmented by any of the QRF?

A I can't recall.

Q Okay. And then did you travel directly to the compound?

A Yes. Yes, we did.

Q Okay.

Mr. Davis. Were you met by anybody else at the airport in addition to the two agents?

Mr. [REDACTED] I believe it was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] may have been there.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did he travel back with you to the compound or did he depart Benghazi?

A No, he traveled back to the compound.

Q Were there any Libyan nationals there when you arrived at the airport?

A From the Embassy -- I mean, from the Special Mission?

Q Yes.

A I can't remember.

Q Okay. Anyone else that the Ambassador knew?

A I believe there may have been -- actually, I can't remember. I don't know if he was -- there was a very close personal friend he had, and I don't believe I can use his name, but I believe he may have been there.

Q When you say you believe you can't use his name, why do you say that?

A [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I'd rather not use his name.

Q And was this individual either at the airport or at the compound when you arrived? I guess my question is, did you see him on that first day, this individual?

A On the first day, yes.

Q Yes. Okay. So was he at the compound the first day?

A As far as I can remember, yes.

Q Okay. And was he part of any conversations that you were either a part of or privy to?

A Me personally, no.

Q He was not discussing the Ambassador's schedule, or movements, or anything like that?

A Not with me.

Q Okay. Were you present when he was discussing the Ambassador's schedule or movements when this individual was talking with the Ambassador or others?

A No.

Q You stated earlier that you were given -- you received additional information regarding the security situation in Benghazi after you arrived in Benghazi. Is that correct? Do I have that right?

A Yes.

Q And where were you when you received this information?

A We were in the vehicle. I was in a Land Cruiser with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] and I was in the back. And it was about a 35-minute drive, I believe. And they started giving me a general rundown.

Q Give us -- please recount as best you can the conversation that you had or the information that they imparted to you on that 35-minute drive from the airport to the compound.

A They may have went over a tentative schedule. They did tell me about the QRF. I believe there was some dispute as far as contractor dispute, so they were limited to, I think, three QRF members.

Q Was there any discussion that the QRF was refusing to do off-compound moves?

A They may have talked about that. I believe so.

Q Was it your understanding that the QRF was not available to do off-compound moves?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what else did you discuss?

A That's -- I don't remember all the details of the conversation. Those are the biggest points there.

Q Was there any conversation about the overall security situation in Benghazi as a location?

A As a location, they told me where it was located, near a commercial district. They said routinely, they said daily -- daily you could expect to hear gunfire and explosions, so it's hard to get a background as far as the ambient noise was explosions and gunfire. So it's violent. So it's real hard to do, as far as threats, it's hard to identify a threat or an incoming threat when every day there is gunfire. So some of those atmospherics.

Q Did they share with you their opinion or their assessment of the overall security situation of the compound, whether they had enough physical security, whether there was enough agents there? Did they impart any of that type of information to you?

A No. They spoke of a meeting. They did talk to me about,



you know, some of the improvements they've made. I found myself to be quite impressed with their level of fidelity on what was going on. You know, they were a TDY just like myself at a field office. They seemed to have a really good handle on what needed to be done.

I remember them talking about the Concertina wire and some other improvements that they were trying to get done and accomplished. But the exact details of that, I can't really recall.

Q Did they talk to you at all about needing more agents in Benghazi?

A No.

Q Any difficulty in getting people assigned TDY to Benghazi?

A No.

Q Did they talk to you at all about their assessment of the local guard force, the unarmed security at the compound?

A Their assessment? No, not that I can remember, no.

Q Did they talk about the local guard force in any manner with you?

A They detailed how many people they had, who the supervisor was for the, I believe it was Blue Mountain, Blue Mountain Group. Then when I arrived they introduced me to them. He ended up showing up. He was a Brit.

Q Had they shared with you any concerns they had over the quality or quantity of local guard force that they were receiving through Blue Mountain Group?

A Not that I remember, no.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q You mentioned on several occasions the Special Mission. Is that a term that you used when you were in Tripoli and Benghazi, or is that a term that you have learned since the attack?

A No, I believe they used Special Mission there.

Q When you say they, are you talking about other RSO agents or DS agents?

A Yes.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q I want to take just, I've got just a few minutes left before the first hour is up, and I want to just take a step back to late August, first of September, when you were in Tripoli. Do you recall that the Libyan Government had issued a maximum state of alert for the country of Libya right around the end of August?

A I can't remember that detail, no.

Q Do you remember that while you were there, there was any type of heightened concern because of -- while you were in Tripoli, was there any time that there was a heightened state of alert that you were aware of?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A There was a vehicle bomb that went off.

Q In Tripoli?

A In Tripoli.

Q Okay. And where did that go off?

A In the city. I can't remember exactly where.

Q And what did that cause you or others to do at the Tripoli Embassy?

A We were already in a heightened posture anyway. I don't think it affected day-to-day operations much.

Q Okay. So movements were not restricted. People were not -- Embassy personnel were not restricted to the compound?

A I can't remember that.

Q Do you recall that September 1 was a special date for the Libyan people?

A I can't remember.

Q You and Agent [REDACTED] travelled with the Ambassador to Benghazi. That's correct? Right? You do have to answer out loud for the reporter.

A Yes, I did.

Q Not for me, but for the official reporter here.

A Yes.

Q And when you traveled with the Ambassador, how many Diplomatic Security agents were left in Tripoli?

A You have to give me a second to count that. I would say between five and seven. I can't remember if the MSD agents were gone at that time.

Q So the five to seven would have included the two MSD agents if they were still there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And how many Foreign Service officers were in Tripoli, approximately how many? So basically how many did you all have to --

A Towards Chief of Mission?

Q Chief of Missions. How many were you providing protection for and security for while you were there?

A Exact number I can't give you, I mean.

Q More than 10, less than 50, is there a range that you could give us?

A I would say there was less than --

Ms. Safai. What size Embassy was it considered?

Mr. [REDACTED] Small. I would say less than 40. More than 15.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Did you and the other agents feel that you had a sufficient number of agents given the size of the Embassy in Tripoli?

A I didn't hear any objections, no.

Q Did you hear any objections from any of your fellow agents as to whether the number of agents and the quality of the QRF in Benghazi was sufficient?

A Not that I can remember.

Q In my last couple of minutes, when you arrived in Benghazi on September 10, did they have any additional security equipment, particularly weapons, that you did not have a like weapon in Tripoli? I asked that very awkwardly, so if you would like me to rephrase it, I will.

A Anything I had not been trained on or that was unfamiliar from what we had in Tripoli?

Q We'll start there.

A No.

Q Did they have any type of weapons that sort of a greater caliber or a greater number than you had? Basically, were they augmented in any way in Benghazi that was different than Tripoli?

A No.

Q Okay.

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q Were you able to take the weapons that were issued to you in Tripoli? Were you able to take those to Benghazi?

A No.

Q So you received new equipment when you arrived in Benghazi?

A Yes.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Were you even able to take your sidearm with you?

A No, I could not.

Q Okay. So when you and Agent Harrison traveled with the Ambassador on the plane, you were unarmed at that time?

A Yes.

Q Were you all three seated in close proximity to each other or next to each other?

A Yes, we were all together in one row.

Ms. Jackson. All right. I see that I only have about 90 seconds

left, so I think we'll go off the record.

Mr. Evers. Sorry, I didn't want to interrupt your flow before, but do you mind, I just wanted to say a couple of quick things before we go off record.

Mr. Davis. Actually, we do want to go off the record.

Ms. Jackson. We do. So let's go off the record first.

[Recess.]

Ms. Sawyer. We'll go back on the record. It is about 12:58.

Mr. [REDACTED] my name is Heather Sawyer. I am one of the counsel for the minority Members. I am joined here today by one of my colleagues, Peter Kenny. The ranking member, Mr. Cummings, is hoping to also join us. So hopefully he'll be here shortly. I don't know his schedule exactly, and I think the snow may have delayed him a little bit, but he does hope to join us. And we all appreciate the time you're taking to be with us, and that you have agreed to talk with us voluntarily.

We appreciate that your time is, you know, scarce, and also that going over this particular incident is probably not easy for you. We definitely appreciate it. We also want to acknowledge -- we know you've already spoken with the Accountability Review Board. You've spoken with the Justice Department and the FBI. We hope that you have had an opportunity to read the Accountability Review Board report, at least the unclassified version. You know, that was a pretty hard-hitting report, but one thing that was very clear in that report and that we heartily agree with and want to thank you for was the tremendous bravery and courage that you and your team on the ground

that night showed. And we certainly appreciate that and appreciate your service. So thank you for that.

At the end of the last hour some questions came up just about ability to protect the record. And so I wanted to just make sure we had fleshed all of those out because in the last hour there were some identifications certainly. And we appreciate you providing the committee with all of the information we asked for. So we do not fault you in any way. We appreciate it. We need the information. We just want to make sure we are taking adequate steps to make sure everyone is protected adequately.

So I just wanted to give an opportunity to have your lawyer express to us, if she would, steps that she thinks would be appropriate for us to take in order to help protect both your identity and anyone that may also be identified on the record through your interview.

Ms. Safai. Sure. Thank you.

Yes, we do like to put on the record our request that the interview be moved to a classified setting. And there is two main reasons for that, the first being that Mr. [REDACTED] name has not been released in public. We want to ensure that that doesn't happen, as well as the names of other individuals that have been thrown out there during this interview.

The second reason is, as I'm sure the committee wants to explore the events of the evening, and that will more likely than not get into sensitive and classified information. So to allow Mr. [REDACTED] to freely tell his story without being interrupted or have to process what's

classified and not, we would prefer that the interview be conducted in a classified setting.

Ms. Sawyer. And then in terms of part of the interview already has not been conducted in a classified setting, so with regard to information that is already in the record, are there steps that we could take to kind of protect particularized information on your behalf?

Ms. Safai. Yes. So with the transcript, we would ask that it be treated as a classified transcript, even though it was not started in an unclass setting.

Ms. Sawyer. Okay. And we will certainly take that request back to the chairman. I don't know if, Sharon, you had anything to add at this point. You had indicated, you know, obviously, that we're all in agreement that these are very serious concerns and that the committee wants to take all necessary steps to make sure that sensitive information that might identify in particular individuals is not in the public domain. So I don't know if you wanted to add anything about those assurances?

Ms. Jackson. The majority staff will -- we hear your concerns. We will certainly do everything in our power to protect the identity of the agents. However, we are in the strong belief that their names are not classified information, and that it would be inappropriate to classify information that is not properly classified, that that would be inappropriate to do.

However, we will take whatever steps are necessary to protect the identity of this agent and other agents who were there, and fully



consider those law enforcement equities out there. The majority staff has absolutely no intention of ever putting any agent at harm, and through the conduct of this committee has never released any information in this forum, posting an interview transcript or putting it in a letter or anything like that. But we do believe that it is inappropriate to classify information that is not properly classified. That is in violation of Federal statutes and regulations.

Ms. Sawyer. Thank you. That's helpful. And I think setting aside the issue of the classification, I do think you have a legitimate concern about potential public release. You know, hopefully what the committee will do is to reach some kind of bipartisan agreement about in particular the release of sensitive transcripts. And we will certainly advise you of that agreement once that agreement has been reached.

So thank you again for being here with us and certainly for sharing your concerns. Having told us your concerns, you know, we are certainly agreeable, and we agree with you that in particular when it comes to the night of, you know, September 11, 2012, that is sensitive. We will agree not to discuss that in this setting and resume our questioning when we do move to the classified setting.

Is that agreeable with you in the majority, that we finish questioning here not touching on the night of the attacks in the unclassified setting?

Ms. Jackson. And as you will have noticed, we did not touch on the night of the attack in this unclassified setting when we were asking

questions in our first hour.

Ms. Safai. Okay. So is the plan to move into a classified setting before we discuss the events?

Ms. Jackson. Yes. So we have made arrangements to have a classified setting this afternoon.

Ms. Sawyer. Okay. Thank you.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So just to start, at the very beginning of the last hour you said in particular that you had volunteered for this reassignment, the TDY assignment in Libya, because you in particular wanted to serve, I think you said, in a high-threat post, acknowledging it wasn't designated that at the time, but, you know, in an environment that posed challenges presumably. Why was that the case?

A Because I had already been on my previous assignment to now, which was Afghanistan, so I just returned in July from Afghanistan, a year tour. And prior to Libya, I had been given [REDACTED] as a follow-on assignment from the Washington DS office.

Q And how would serving in a challenging security environment have helped you in that regard or been of interest to you?

A Just understanding with, you know, elevated threat and some of the limitations you have in a country lacking certain security apparatus, kind of how to navigate those muddy waters. For me it seemed like it would be challenging and, again, a good follow-up for Afghanistan.

Q So it would help in terms of your own building your experience and career? Is that --

A Understanding State Department or Diplomatic Security processes in a hazardous environment, yeah.

Q Now, one of the other things you touched on when we were talking just the last hour was during some of the planning right before you went to Benghazi, so on I think the 9th of September, 2012, there was a discussion, you said, about some of the events that would take place in Benghazi and the desire to reduce the media profile of the Ambassador. And why was that an important consideration?

A Just to, again, limit his visibility. Ambassador Stevens was extremely popular. And it's not necessarily a negative aspect. It's a positive aspect. You know, he's well renowned. There was only person better liked in Libya than Christopher Stevens, and that was John McCain. They just love him.

So again, to limit that too, because if they knew he was in town, more media would come, again, more scrutiny. Who knows? You know, we don't know how that would -- any of his venues or even any of those movements to the Embassy, you may have people coming wanting just to meet him. Who knows? You know, I mean I -- but again, that's speculative.

Q And that desire to keep his visibility relatively low, would that have been a factor also in deciding how many DS agents should accompany him to Benghazi, to the extent you know?

A I don't know.

Q And you talked a little bit about when you arrived in Benghazi, you were met by two DS agents from the Special Mission and that there was some discussion in the car, and one thing that you indicated did come up in the car was just they touched on a contract dispute that was going on with some of their local guards who were on compound. Did you know and understand or have any sense of the nature of that contract dispute?

A No.

Q Did you have any sense of whether it was being worked out at the time?

A I knew prior to, there was a meeting. They had a meeting, I believe it was the two agents, [REDACTED] and an intermediary that had a meeting with 17th February to discuss those issues.

Q And were you in any discussions, or were you aware of any discussions that had taken place between the agents on the ground who were in those discussions about the contract and you all in Tripoli as you were planning the Ambassador's trip about this particular issue and how it might impact security while you were in Benghazi?

A I was not part of those meetings, no.

Q And stepping back just a tiny bit, I think you -- there was some discussion about staffing in Tripoli and who made up your team and whatnot. I just wanted to try to get a clear understanding of who your supervisor was in Tripoli, who you would have been reporting to.

A The RSO, [REDACTED].

Q Okay. And was [REDACTED], was the RSO the person primarily

responsible for communications between post and DS in Washington, D.C., or would that have been someone else, about Diplomatic Security-related issues?

A As being RSO, it should have been [REDACTED].

Q And would you have been involved in all of those discussions?

A No.

Q And if he had communicated either by phone or by email, would you have been included on all of the email discussions that he would have had with folks here in Washington or elsewhere?

A No.

Q While it wasn't your primary responsibility to communicate with Washington, as I understand it -- was that the case?

A No, it wasn't my responsibility.

Q Was there a mechanism, had you had a concern that you wanted to share with someone at Main State, DS here at Main State, was there a way for you to have done that?

A At the time?

Q Yes.

A Not that I knew of.

Q Did you ever have a concern that you felt like you needed to convey back but didn't have a mechanism for doing it during your time in Tripoli?

A No.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Now, when you did get to Benghazi, you talked a little bit about a briefing that took place in the car, and then you indicated, but we didn't really talk about it, that once you got to the Special Mission, there was some review of the compound and facility and security.

Can you just talk to us about who those conversations were with and what those entailed? Like, what was the content of those conversations?

A Those conversations were with the TYRSOs and the RSO, acting RSO there in the TOC. There was some conversation in the vehicle and some in the TOC. The specificity with which, like, where and what is a little bit kind of put together in my head, melded, but generally did give me -- when I arrived, I know they gave me a quick rundown of the compound, they walked me around, they walked me into the Ambassador's villa, they showed me the TOC, they showed me where I would be staying, and some other discussions regarding what the emergency action plan would be.

Q And I think we'll reserve until we're in the classified setting more specific discussions about that emergency action plan, but just as a -- in a general way, did you feel that you

had -- comfortable with the information that you had gotten, that you had the information that you needed to be able to do your job --

A Yes.

Q -- at the Special Mission? Were there any particular concerns that you had that you raised --

A No.

Q -- about security?

A No.

Q Were you in any conversations with anyone else, and I'm just talking about when you arrived on the 10th, where they expressed security concerns about being able to protect the Special Mission?

A No.

Q During the time that you were with the Ambassador and planning for the trip either, you know, in Tripoli on the 9th or as you were traveling even, because it sounds like you were all in very close proximity on the plane --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- did you talk about the Ambassador's reasons for being in Benghazi?

A No.

Q Did you have an understanding of what his reasons were for being there?

A Yes. He hadn't been there for a while since he had become Ambassador, and he felt it important to go back and listen to some of the -- any issues they had there.

Q And were you involved at all in planning the exact timing of his trip?

A No.

Q And do you know who was involved in the planning of the timing, that he would be there the 10th, I think? And do you remember the end date that he was supposed to be there?

A I remember the end date. Who exactly was doing all the detailed planning, I don't know.

Q And what was the end -- planned end date?

A I believe it was Friday.

Q My calendar recollection will be horrible. Does it sound like that was the 14th?

A 14th, yes.

Q 14th of September. And did the Ambassador express to you at any point any particular concerns about security he had about the trip to Benghazi?

A No.

Q I think a number of our other questions we're going to just reserve for the classified setting, but I did want to talk briefly with you about the Accountability Review Board process. You did speak with the Accountability Review Board. Do you recall roughly when that happened?

A I'd say roughly the last week of September or October, I believe.

Q And how did you find out about that, the ARB, and that it



was going to be convened and that they would want to talk with you?

A It was hard to miss. Everyone told me that, you know, I was going to have to speak before the ARB. Who exactly, I don't know.

Q There have been some allegations with regard to the ARB and the ARB process that it either wasn't thorough enough, or it wasn't independent enough, or that individuals were asked not to share all of the information they had. Did anyone ever indicate to you that you should withhold information from the ARB?

A No.

Q Did anyone ever give you any instructions about what you should say to the ARB?

A No.

Q And did you feel that in your conversation with them you were able to be fully forthcoming and give them all of the information that you wanted to?

A Yes.

Q And did you feel that they were thorough in their questioning of you?

A Yes.

Q And have you actually had an opportunity ever to read at least the unclassified version of the ARB report?

A Yes.

Q And did that -- I don't know how long ago it was that you read it, but do you recall whether or not you felt it accurately reflected your experience while you had been in Benghazi?

A Yes, yes.

Q Did you think there were issues that the Accountability Review Board failed to capture in terms of both your experience and any concerns that might have existed about the environment in Benghazi?

A Nothing that stands out.

Q I'm going to ask you just one somewhat specific question about the report. You know, as I mentioned when we first started, it was a pretty hard-hitting report. It also had some positives aspects, certainly around everything that you, your team, your colleagues did, very positive. And certainly we have no -- no other -- other belief other than that you guys acted tremendously well and with courage.

The ranking member has just joined us, so I'm going to hand it over to him. But I had just one more question for you before we did that.

As I said, it was a hard-hitting report. But one thing that the ARB also did recognize, and I'll just quote from the report, and it said, quote, DS, Diplomatic Security, overall has done a fine job protecting thousands of employees in some 273 diplomatic missions around the world. No diplomatic presence is without risk, given past attempts by terrorists to pursue U.S. targets worldwide, and the total elimination of risk is a non-starter for U.S. diplomacy, given the need for the U.S. Government to be present in places where stability and security are often most profoundly lacking and host government support is sometimes minimal to non-existent.

You were on the front lines of this. You were -- you volunteered

and took on an assignment in a place that you knew posed particularized security challenges. Having been there and having really been on the front lines, do you still believe that it's important for the U.S. to be able to conduct diplomacy in dangerous places, places that pose challenges, but may be very important for us to be?

A Yes.

Ms. Sawyer. And with that, I would like to introduce Ranking Member Cummings, and have him -- I know that he wants to welcome you here as well.

Mr. Cummings. I'll be very brief. Good afternoon.

Mr. [REDACTED] I just want to thank you for your service. And I want to take a moment to offer our condolences for your colleagues, the loss, and to let you know that we really appreciate all that you've been through.

We've been told of your and others' bravery that night, and we want to thank you for that. We can only begin to appreciate the grave danger and difficulty you experienced and how that must still affect you to this very day.

The Select Committee's investigation is now in the eighth -- this is the eighth congressional investigation of the attacks in Benghazi. Early on in our investigation we met with family members from all the families of the fallen, and they shared with us their grief over their loss of loved ones, and also they were looking for, and they made it clear, for some closure in all of this. And we vowed to do that, to help them do that, and we said that we would search for the truth,

because I think that's all they wanted. They wanted to make sure this didn't -- if there were things that could have been done to avoid this, that we do everything in our power to find out what those things were and then go about that type of reform.

So I know firsthand how difficult that process can be, having lost a young family member myself, 20 years old, 3 years ago, shot down, actually killed, college student, robbed at 5 o'clock in the morning, and then go to -- the next day go to his apartment the next day to see his blown brain -- his brain matter all over the walls is not -- it's kind of a tough thing to -- just sticks with you.

So there's another dimension here, though, and that is of those like you, who experienced these events firsthand, who carry on with memories of that night. That also includes your family members, who continue to support you and work through the memories and trauma from the night.

Now, I just have a few questions. I appreciate that this might be difficult, but it's also very important to have an understanding of how our work impacts your family. Can you share with us how continued attention to the attack affected you, your family, and the DS -- your DS colleagues?

Mr. [REDACTED] As far as my colleagues, I don't know exactly how they feel about it. But for myself, looking at it after talking to the ARB, I felt that most of the detail -- everyone went in there and spoke the truth, gave all the relevant facts, everything that they needed to say. So it's sometimes disheartening that the continued scrutiny and

sometimes the criticisms of our actions, when our actions were in the best intentions, and everything we did was in protection of the ambassador can sometimes be a little bit disheartening. But it's good to see that there are people who are supportive and working to get to the truth and make sure that the narrative is written the right way.

Mr. Cummings. Well, one of the first tasks that I undertook as the ranking member on this committee was to commission an what's called an asked-and-answered database, of which we could compile in one place as much information as possible regarding questions asked and answered based on the work of the seven previous investigations as well as the Accountability Review Board. I had hoped that this effort would help this committee define its scope and prevent unnecessary duplication.

Mr. [REDACTED] are there any specific questions that we can help answer for you or what you would like for us to focus on?

Mr. [REDACTED] No.

Mr. Cummings. In October 2013, I attended a deposition of a colleague of yours who was on the ground with you the night of the attacks. Your colleague expressed his grave concerns over the impact that the public disclosure of his name had had on his family's sense of security. And this is what he explained, and I quote, I'm a primary witness in a terrorism investigation. To stymie that investigation, now all the terrorists on their -- or their elements after they know who to target. My name being said twice in open session has made my family and me feel substantially less safe.

And I understand that your name has not been publicly mentioned

in connection with the attacks, but do you have any concerns over disclosure of your identity in connection with the attacks?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, I do.

Mr. Cummings. And what are your concerns?

Mr. [REDACTED] The same security considerations, especially now with many things that you've seen in, you know, attacks with ISIS, there are so many things that we'd be fairly public and an easy target for someone, even from a lone wolf, it would be easy for them to say, you know, target them. So I would prefer it wasn't released.

Mr. Cummings. And I take it your family has the same concerns?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Mr. Cummings. So I just want to assure you that I take the ongoing prosecution and investigation, as well as your personal safety and security, very seriously. And what you just said does not surprise me. As I said, one of your comrades said something almost identical. And I'm going to work with the chairman and the other members of our committee to make sure that we do everything in our power to make sure that you are safe and that we do not mean to jeopardize your safety. And, again, I want to thank you for being here.

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Mr. Cummings. Thank you for your -- you know, giving so much to our country.

Ms. Sawyer. Wonderful. Thank you.

So as we had spoken about before, we want to be very sensitive to concerns about speaking in particular about both the security

information you were given, you know, the day, and then the incident on the night of the attack. So I think we are finished with what we would like to ask you in this setting.

We can go ahead and reconvene then in the classified.

Ms. Jackson. At this very moment, or should we break for lunch? Why don't we --

Ms. Sawyer. We can go off the record.

[Whereupon, at 12:15 p.m., the interview proceeded in classified session.]

1           Ms. Sawyer. We are resuming the interview in a  
2           classified setting. I think just at the outset, we should  
3           establish what level of classification, so if you would just  
4           share with us, Mr [REDACTED], the level to which you are cleared,  
5           certainly.

6           Mr. [REDACTED]. I am cleared to TS/SCI.

7           Ms. Sawyer. Okay. And is everyone in the room? I  
8           mean, I don't want to --

9           Mr. Davis. I believe so.

10          Ms. Safai. TS only.

11          Ms. Sawyer. Okay. So we will mark it at the lowest  
12          classification level, at top secret. Certainly, you know, if  
13          anything requires going beyond that, if you could alert us,  
14          we'd appreciate it. That would be wonderful.

15          And I think Mr. Davis had asked -- had you had any  
16          opening remarks before we resume questioning?

17          Mr. Davis. Sure. Thanks, Heather. I just wanted to  
18          say that without the benefit of a transcript, it is our  
19          understanding that during the last hour the ranking member  
20          read verbatim a portion of a deposition from your colleague,  
21          [REDACTED]. Since both the House and committee rules  
22          guiding the use of a deposition prohibit its release absent  
23          an agreement between the chairman and ranking member or a  
24          committee vote, the deposition cannot and may not be released  
25          or quoted in part or in whole until such an agreement or



1 committee vote has occurred. It is our understanding that  
2 neither of these actions has taken place.

3 Ms. Sawyer. Well, it's our understanding that the  
4 record into which it was read is not a part of the public  
5 record, that there is going to be an effort to reach a  
6 bipartisan agreement on release of that interview record.  
7 Certainly that portion that contains anything that is  
8 otherwise bound by rules would not be released by the  
9 minority, that portion, without that agreement having been  
10 reached, and we will abide by any restrictions that are on  
11 that transcript. But I also want to make clear that by  
12 virtue of House Resolution 567 as re-incorporated in this  
13 Congress, that resolution required all committees to turn  
14 over to the Select Committee on Benghazi their records, and  
15 that those records then became our committee records. So I  
16 think it is not entirely clear, given that this committee has  
17 no rules governing its process or procedures, that there is  
18 actually a rule that binds this committee vis-a-vis how it  
19 treats the materials that are now committee records.

20 Mr. Davis. And it is our understanding that based on  
21 the rules package that accompanied H.Res. 567 in the 113th  
22 Congress to the floor of the House, the same deposition rules  
23 that were in place over at the Oversight Committee were  
24 attached to that rules package and remain in place here.

25 Ms. Sawyer. Okay. Well, I'm sure that the chairman and

1 the ranking member will take this up at the appropriate time.  
2 And as I said, we will abide by whatever bipartisan agreement  
3 is reached on that.

4 Okay. With that said, I think we can now resume with  
5 the questions. It's about 2:26, and I think we had roughly a  
6 half-hour left on our time. I don't know that we'll need all  
7 that time, but, you know, certainly we'll be as expedient as  
8 we can.

9 BY MS. SAWYER:

10 Q So while we were in the unclassified setting, you  
11 had talked a little bit about when you first arrived in  
12 Benghazi, and I just wanted to pick up there and in this  
13 setting where you might be a little more free to talk about  
14 details, just resume with the conversation.

15 So you had arrived in Benghazi and were met at the  
16 airport. And then from the airport, did you travel directly  
17 to the Special Mission facility?

18 A Yes, I did.

19 Q And once you had gotten there, could you just  
20 explain to us how -- you know, kind of what took place and  
21 how you became familiar with the facility compound and the  
22 security plans there and who you discussed that with?

23 A Okay. There was some discussion on the way there,  
24 they gave me some specifics as to what was going on. As far  
25 as the QRF, how many guards were on, the requests that were

1 put in by -- to the SSC for an increased presence outside the  
2 embassy, they detailed that to me. And then as we were  
3 driving in, they showed me a compound that was, I'd say,  
4 maybe 50 meters off along the same road that there was a  
5 local militia that resided there. They told me that to this  
6 point, they had been relatively benign. Detailed that to me.

7 And as we drove in, as we passed certain items, they'd  
8 just point things out, tell me some of the upgrades as far as  
9 the vehicle barriers, drop arms, those type of things that  
10 they had worked on improving. There was some mention of  
11 consultina -- or additional consultina.

12 And as we drove in, they worked to get me situated  
13 quickly. We were going to go on a movement that day, so I  
14 walked into the TOC. We walked into the TOC, we talked about  
15 what was going to happen that day. That day we were going on  
16 a movement. [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED] they made me understand that we  
18 would move on to another venue and that we would be supported  
19 by [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED], more of like a follow  
21 vehicle, and that they would actually be on hand with us  
22 there as additional security.

23 Q So you mentioned as you were describing that to us  
24 that they talked to you a little bit about a request that had  
25 been made to the SSC for increased security?

1           A     Yes.

2           Q     Who was -- what was your understanding of who the  
3     SSC was?

4           A     The Supreme Security Council. I knew that it was a  
5     pseudo militia/police force/military with elements of, again,  
6     different militia groups.

7           Q     And do you know what the request had been for  
8     increased security?

9           A     For at least two vehicles, I believe at each gate.

10          Q     And how -- had that request been granted? Was it  
11     being done?

12          A     They told me the request went in. I don't know  
13     specifics of whether it was granted. The first day I do  
14     remember two vehicles outside, though.

15          Q     And did they express to you any concern about the  
16     status of their request, that it hadn't been granted and that  
17     had caused concern for them?

18          A     That day, no, but the next day, there were -- two  
19     vehicles weren't on -- on station, at the mission, so, yeah,  
20     that was a concern.

21          Q     Okay. So that would have been on 9/11 --

22          A     Yes.

23          Q     -- 2012? And -- and what was done about that  
24     concern when it was noticed, to the extent you know?

25          A     I think that as far as the request for the vehicle

1 and whatever dispute against -- that it wasn't -- that we  
2 weren't given the vehicles, along with -- there was question  
3 that morning with surveillance. As far as I remember, there  
4 was surveillance on the compound from an adjacent villa, so  
5 they were sending a dip note to the Libyan Government.

6 Q And when you refer to a dip note, is that a  
7 diplomatic note?

8 A Diplomatic note, yeah.

9 Q And who was responsible? Do you know who was  
10 responsible for doing that reporting?

11 A It was being drafted by [REDACTED].

12 Ms. Sawyer. I think the spelling of that is [REDACTED].

13 BY MS. SAWYER:

14 Q And do you know whether he completed the request  
15 and had submitted the request?

16 A Well, he had completed it, but the Ambassador had  
17 final approval on it, and the Ambassador looked at it that  
18 night. I was in the cantina with him when he had looked at  
19 it. He had a couple of comments and made some corrections  
20 and then he had given it back to one of the other agents. I  
21 don't believe it was [REDACTED]. So I don't even believe it went  
22 out that night.

23 Q Okay. So as of the evening of 9/11, it had not yet  
24 been submitted to the Libyan Government?

25 A No. Not that I know.

1 Q Now, you said that, you know, when you got there,  
2 they worked to get you situated pretty quickly. Did you feel  
3 comfortable once they had run you through the basics that you  
4 kind of had an understanding of where things were located on  
5 the compound?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And one of the things that came up in the unclass  
8 setting was the inability of you and the other DS agents to  
9 travel on a commercial plane with weapons. Once you got  
10 there, what was your access to, you know, weapons to be able  
11 to, you know, kind of fulfill your security?

12 A So as soon as we arrived, the two agents that I  
13 rode with, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], they had a rifle for me in the  
14 vehicle and some ammunition.

15 Q And then once you got to the compound, were you  
16 made familiar with what weapons were available on compound?

17 A Yes.

18 Q And what was the kind of available weaponry?

19 A [REDACTED] I believe they  
20 also had a shotgun in the -- in the safe, and a Sig Sauer  
21 9-millimeter pistol.

22 Q So you said that there was a conversation in the  
23 TOC --

24 A Yes.

25 Q -- about a movement, a couple of movements that

1 were going to occur that day.

2 A Yes.

3 Q And so TOC stands for?

4 A Tactical Operation Center.

5 Q And why would the conversations have occurred in  
6 the TOC?

7 A That's probably the most secure place there for a  
8 variety of reasons, physically. And as far as communications  
9 go, that's where we had the secret computer was in the TOC as  
10 well, along with the SMSC system, which is the -- the video  
11 camera system where you could see all the video, and the DVR  
12 was all located in that room, along with the safe. [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 Q And did they talk to you at all about the video  
16 system in the TOC? Were you made familiar with that at all?

17 A They showed it to me. As far as how to operate it,  
18 I already understood how to operate the video system in  
19 Tripoli, so we didn't go into detail on that, no.

20 Q And did anyone express any concerns about the video  
21 system or the adequacy of any of the other equipment in the  
22 TOC?

23 A No.

24 Q Any concerns about the communi- -- the ability to  
25 communicate on compound amongst the various agents expressed

1 in those or any other conversations?

2 A No. I was issued a radio.

3 Q And was that your only means of communicating with  
4 each other on compound?

5 A No. We had cell phones.

6 Q And did you discuss at that point or, you know, any  
7 other point during that day kind of an emergency action plan?

8 A The day I arrived?

9 Q Yes.

10 A I don't -- I can't remember if we went into full  
11 detail on it or if it was the following day after we were  
12 notified of the surveillance. I know we talked about some of  
13 the physical security, you know, where the fences were, who  
14 manned them, what the security footprint looked like with the  
15 Blue Mountain Group and with the 17 February QRF, but as far  
16 as the detailing of the EAP, or the emergency action plan, I  
17 do not -- I can't recall if it was that day or the next  
18 day -- or if it was rehashed the next day. I know we spoke  
19 about it on the 11th in depth.

20 Q So you said there was some discussion. I'm going  
21 to break that down a little bit, because there were a number  
22 of points in it. There was some discussion about the role of  
23 the Blue Mountain Guard. What was your understanding as to  
24 their role?

25 A Access. They provided screening and access to



1 anyone coming into the compound.

2 Q So they were located inside the compound --

3 A Yes.

4 Q -- and they would screen people coming in?

5 A Uh-huh.

6 Q And did you get a chance to meet any of those  
7 guards?

8 A I can't remember if it was -- they were probably  
9 pointed out to me. They were pointed out to me, but I can't  
10 remember if I physically went and introduced myself.

11 Q And do you know whether those guards had -- were  
12 armed?

13 A They were not.

14 Q Okay. And did anyone express any concerns to you  
15 about the performance of the Blue Mountain Guard?

16 A No.

17 Q And then what was your understanding of the  
18 February 17th? You described them as a QRF. And just for  
19 the record, what does QRF stand for?

20 A Quick reaction force.

21 Q And what was your understanding of their role?

22 A If there was some type of attack in the city  
23 outside of compound, they would respond, but at that time,  
24 they would not, for whatever contract dispute. They were --  
25 they said -- they had stated they would not respond outside

1 of compound. On compound, they had three people there and  
2 they would be a quick reaction force, essentially, or repel  
3 invaders or attackers.

4 Q So there were three people on compound. Were those  
5 the only personnel from February 17th, to your understanding,  
6 that were available?

7 A To my understanding.

8 Q Okay. So there wouldn't be additional forces, as  
9 you understood it, coming to the assistance of the mission  
10 from February 17th?

11 A Yes, from -- but not from the compound.

12 Q Understood.

13 A So if the -- from what I understand, from what I  
14 was made to understand, that if the compound was attacked,  
15 they would respond and they would respond within 15 minutes.

16 Q Okay. So the three that were on the compound,  
17 obviously, would be there to respond --

18 A Yes.

19 Q -- instantaneously?

20 A And additional February 17 forces would come from  
21 where they were located within 15 minutes if we were  
22 attacked.

23 Q And do you have a sense of how large that reaction  
24 force that was to be there in 15 minutes was?

25 A No.

1 Q Did anyone express to you any concerns about the  
2 capabilities of the February 17th quick reaction force to  
3 do -- fulfill their obligation to help protect the mission?

4 A No, no.

5 Q And who was it of your colleagues who explained to  
6 you, to the extent you can remember, kind of what the ongoing  
7 conversation was, dispute, contract dispute was with the  
8 February 17th folks?

9 A I don't know. It could have been one of the three,  
10 but -- if we were in the TOC, it could have been one of the  
11 three agents that were there. I just can't pinpoint who  
12 exactly said what.

13 Q One of the three who was stationed already in  
14 Benghazi?

15 A Yes.

16 Q So it wouldn't have been Mr. [REDACTED], who --

17 A No.

18 Q -- had traveled with you? It would either have  
19 been --

20 A [REDACTED], [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

21 Q [REDACTED]. Okay. So one of the things you  
22 mentioned about the discussion in the TOC was that you  
23 discussed some movements, one was to the Annex nearby. So  
24 did you then accompany the team that went from the Special  
25 Mission to the Annex?

1 A Yes.

2 Q And who was with that group?

3 A Every agent except [REDACTED].

4 Q And did that occur on the 10th when you guys got  
5 there?

6 A Occurred on the 10th, yes.

7 Q Okay. And who did you meet with at the Annex?

8 A We were introduced to -- so essentially, we were  
9 doing a kind of a -- the Ambassador was going to speak to  
10 everyone there, the GRS, everyone there, support staff,  
11 primary staff, he was going to speak to all of them, so we  
12 all gathered in one of the villas and did a general  
13 introduction. So, yeah, that was pretty much it.

14 Q And do you recall in general what the Ambassador  
15 spoke about?

16 A No, I don't. I mean, it was in generalities, he  
17 spoke about, you know, his view of -- you know, thanking  
18 everyone for their service, what they've done, how important  
19 Benghazi was to him and, you know, it had been a long time  
20 since he'd been there.

21 Q So is it fair to say that part of the meeting on  
22 the -- at the Annex was a bit of a meet, a greet, an  
23 introduction and thank you from the Ambassador?

24 A Yeah, that was a portion of it. And then he had  
25 his meeting with the chief of base.

1 Q Okay. And were you --

2 A Or chief of station.

3 Q I'm sorry. I think I spoke over you. You think  
4 the meeting was with the chief of base?

5 A So the -- we had a general discussion with everyone  
6 and then he went off on his own to speak with the chief of  
7 station.

8 Q Okay. And was anyone else in that meeting with the  
9 chief and with the Ambassador?

10 A None of us, no. No.

11 Q Okay.

12 A None of the agents went into that meeting, no.

13 Q Do you know if anyone else other than the agents --  
14 other than the Ambassador and the chief were in that meeting?

15 A No.

16 Q And how long did that meeting take, roughly?

17 A Upwards of 20 minutes.

18 Q And during that time, what did you do?

19 A We discussed how we would -- how the movement would  
20 work out. We talked to the GRS agents. I spoke to Tyrone  
21 Woods. He gave us a rundown of their -- their TOC, their  
22 Tactical Operation Center, he showed it to us. There were  
23 some movement as far as vehicles, decisions about who  
24 would -- you know, who would be in what vehicles, that type  
25 of thing.

1 Q And when you said how the movement would work, are  
2 you talking about the movement that then occurred --

3 A To the --

4 Q -- after this meeting?

5 A Yes, to the hotel.

6 Q Okay. And at that time when you were having that  
7 conversation, who was present during that conversation that  
8 you were having that included Ty Woods.

9 A I believe it was [REDACTED], [REDACTED]. And I  
10 can't remember. It could have been [REDACTED], could have been  
11 [REDACTED] I can't remember.

12 Q But not the full complement of your DS team?

13 A I don't know.

14 Q And did -- and was anyone else from the Annex,  
15 other than Mr. Woods, involved in the conversation?

16 A I can't remember.

17 Q And do you recall Mr. Woods raising any security  
18 concerns about, first, the Special Mission facility with you?

19 A No.

20 Q Did any of -- did either you or any of the DS  
21 agents raise with Mr. Woods or during that meeting concerns  
22 that they had about the security of the Special Mission  
23 facility?

24 A I did not. I mean, I don't remember anyone else  
25 bringing them up -- bringing it up.

1 Q Did Mr. Woods express any concerns about the  
2 security at the Annex?

3 A No.

4 Q And did any of the DS agents, you or any of your  
5 colleagues, raise any concerns about security at the Annex?

6 A No.

7 Q Now --

8 A Not that I know of. I did not.

9 Q You did not. Okay. Now, this was, you know, on  
10 the 10th of September, kind of on the eve of the 11th, and  
11 the September 11th is the anniversary of the 9/11, 2001,  
12 terrorist attacks. Was there any discussion about that  
13 anniversary posing any security concerns?

14 A No. Not between myself and anyone.

15 Q Were you aware that that anniversary was  
16 happening --

17 A Yes.

18 Q -- the next day?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Had you -- I mean -- if you had had concerns about  
21 that anniversary posing security risks, would you have felt  
22 comfortable raising those?

23 A Yes.

24 Q So did -- was it the case that that anniversary  
25 itself or that particular time did not pose particular

1 security concerns for you?

2 A No.

3 Q Did anyone else raise a concern -- and I may have  
4 asked you this. I apologize -- about it being the  
5 anniversary of September 11th?

6 A Not that I can remember.

7 Q After the 20-minute meeting that the Ambassador had  
8 with the chief, did you then leave and go on the second  
9 movement, or were you guys at the Annex for a longer period  
10 of time than that?

11 A The time frame is a little fuzzy. I can't give you  
12 a really definitive answer. We were somewhat pressed for  
13 time, I believe, so we may have just left as soon as he was  
14 done with his meeting.

15 Q And from the Annex, did you then go, and we'll talk  
16 a little bit about where you guys went, but you went on the  
17 movement, you didn't return to the Special Mission facility?

18 A We did go back to the Special Mission, yes. Yeah.

19 Q And did anything occur during that period of time  
20 where there was a discussion of security concerns or anything  
21 that needed to be taken care of in that regard?

22 A Not that I can remember, no.

23 Q And then where was that particular movement on that  
24 day that you -- and did -- were you part of the team that  
25 escorted the Ambassador?



1 A Yes.

2 Q And how many agents from the Special Mission went  
3 with the Ambassador?

4 A To the hotel?

5 Q Yes.

6 A Four agents.

7 Q From the mission?

8 A From the mission.

9 Q And then you were also supported with some  
10 personnel from the Annex?

11 A Two.

12 Q Two personnel. And just, if you could, briefly  
13 describe for us what that particular movement was to the best  
14 of your kind of understanding or what the Ambassador was  
15 doing.

16 A Okay. So he was going to meet with the city  
17 council, and then he would have a follow-on dinner with some  
18 colleagues and some friends, or some friends there in the  
19 evening for the duration of the evening, for however long  
20 that went.

21 Q And roughly how long were you out?

22 A From -- we arrived in -- I would say time frames  
23 are a little bit fuzzy, so I would say between 3:00, 4:00,  
24 more like 4 o'clock until the evening, which would have been  
25 upwards of about 10 o'clock, maybe.

1 Q And then you returned to the Special Mission  
2 facility?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And did anything -- from a security perspective,  
5 did anything occur during that movement either in transit,  
6 while you were at the meeting, or on your way back that  
7 raised any concerns from a security perspective?

8 A Well, the media arrived while we were -- he was  
9 having his meeting with the city council, and we turned them  
10 away, we did our best to turn them away.

11 Q And why was that a security concern?

12 A Again, we wanted to try to limit his exposure and  
13 visibility.

14 Q And were any particular steps taken after that had  
15 happened to try to, you know, mitigate any concerns that you  
16 might have?

17 A After that? The goal was to keep him on compound  
18 the next day, to limit his meetings to just being on the  
19 premises of the Special Mission.

20 Q Okay. So the decision to -- the next day, which  
21 was 9/11, 2012, to remain on compound was made after the  
22 meeting where the media --

23 A It was discussed prior to, but having the media  
24 show up, it just -- just a reiteration of it's essential that  
25 he does not go off of the agreed-upon schedule and try to

1 maintain presence on the mission.

2 Q So the decision was that an earlier decision to  
3 minimize movement and stay on the compound on 9/11 was  
4 confirmed as the wise security response in addition because  
5 of the media attention?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And do you recall -- the decision not to minimize  
8 movement and not go off compound on the -- on 9/11, do you  
9 recall -- were you in the discussions about that?

10 A No.

11 Q So you're not -- do you -- do you have any  
12 understanding of why the decision was made to minimize  
13 movement on 9/11?

14 A One, lack -- I mean, lack of agents. It's not  
15 really easy moving him around from place to place, and just  
16 the overall security situation in Benghazi.

17 Q And did you feel comfortable that that decision was  
18 adequate to mitigate concerns that people had about security  
19 at the time?

20 A Yes.

21 Q During the time that you were at the Annex, I'm  
22 just going to go back to that conversation again, and  
23 understanding you weren't in the conversation that occurred  
24 between the Ambassador and the chief, was there any  
25 conversation that you were in where there was a discussion of

1 potential co-location between the mission, the Special  
2 Mission Compound and the Annex during the Ambassador's visit?

3 A No.

4 Q Did you have any knowledge about broader  
5 discussions about co-location between the Annex and the  
6 Special Mission facility in Benghazi?

7 A I had heard it discussed, yes.

8 Q And what was your understanding of that -- of kind  
9 of the process there about that possibility?

10 A That they -- one, it was, they wanted it to happen,  
11 both sides, and logistically they were looking at how to make  
12 that happen, both the agency side and the embassy side.

13 Q And did you get a sense about and kind of what the  
14 level of cooperation between the Annex and the Special  
15 Mission Compound personnel was on a security front?

16 A Extremely good.

17 Q And, you know, can you describe that to us at all?  
18 Like, was it an agreement that they would assist each other?

19 A Yeah. From both sides, you could tell there was --  
20 one, it was a mutually supporting agreement, so -- and I'd  
21 been in a discussion where they had discussed this, where it  
22 had been brought up where if they were attacked, we would  
23 assist them; if we were attacked, they would assist us  
24 however possible.

25 Ms. Sawyer. Okay. I think, you know, we can stop for

1 now and let you guys continue on.

2 And then we can go off the record.

3 [Recess.]

4 Mr. Davis. I just want to jump around a little bit  
5 here. I'm a little more junior than these two ladies, so my  
6 experience at being smooth with the asking of questions is  
7 not as strong as theirs.

8 Mr. Evers. Are we still classified?

9 Mr. Davis. We are.

10 Mr. Evers. I just want to make sure --

11 Mr. Davis. Yes. We are.

12 Mr. Evers. -- just for my notes.

13 Examination

14 BY MR. DAVIS:

15 Q First question I had for you, and Heather talked  
16 about this earlier, has to do with your interview before the  
17 Accountability Review Board. Can you repeat really quickly  
18 when your interview before the Accountability Review Board  
19 was?

20 A So as I recall, it was either at the end of  
21 September or first week of October. It was fairly soon after  
22 I came back.

23 Q And how did you first learn that the ARB wanted to  
24 speak with you?

25 A Just generally from leadership.

1 Q And --

2 A Yeah.

3 Q -- how long between when you were first contacted  
4 did you go in for your interview?

5 A I don't -- I can't recall.

6 Q A couple days, a week, a couple weeks?

7 A I don't know. I may be completely off with the  
8 time frame, too, as far as --

9 Q Okay.

10 A You know, it's kind of -- you know, I came back. I  
11 can't remember if it was directly after. I remember taking  
12 2 weeks off when I came back. So, again, I talked to the  
13 grand jury pretty soon after I came back, so I don't know  
14 where that fits in line with the ARB.

15 Q Could you describe, to the best of your  
16 recollection, your actual interview with the ARB, where was  
17 it, who was present?

18 A Okay. So it was at the -- on the first floor of  
19 main State. It was with -- the most prominent members are  
20 Ambassador Pickering and Admiral Mullen. Everyone else, I  
21 wouldn't be able to tell you.

22 Q Were they both present for your interview?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And how many other people were present?

25 A I'd say upward of 12 to 15.

1 Q Okay. And did you -- did you know any of the other  
2 people in the room? Were they part of the ARB? Were they  
3 other State Department personnel? Do you remember who else  
4 was in the room with you?

5 A As far as I was made to understand, the majority  
6 were ARB staff -- or ARB panel and then some of their staff  
7 and DOJ.

8 Q And do you know how many members of DOJ were in the  
9 room?

10 A One or two. I mean, I think it was two.

11 Q Was the interview -- was there a court reporter  
12 present during that interview like there is in this one?

13 A I can't remember.

14 Q And were you the only person being interviewed?

15 A At that -- well, not that day.

16 Q When you were there.

17 A When I was in the room? Yes.

18 Q Yes.

19 A It was just myself. I believe I was the last one  
20 to go that day.

21 Q And do you know approximately how long your  
22 interview was?

23 A I would say mine was about an hour.

24 Q Okay. You mentioned very early on that you took  
25 high threat training with DS. Is that correct?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Do you remember from your high threat training the  
3 suggested number of agents and/or vehicles when a principal  
4 makes a movement?

5 A No.

6 Q Do you recall ever learning what the required  
7 number of agents or vehicles were on a particular detail when  
8 an individual is making a movement?

9 A I don't recall if there was a requirement, no.

10 Q Do you recall being taught that during your high  
11 threat training?

12 A [REDACTED].  
13 [REDACTED].

14 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]?

16 A It would depend. It would be -- because the  
17 numbers we had, since it was a training environment [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]  
19 it was training, and it was evolution training to get people  
20 through it.

21 Q So jumping ahead in time to your time in Tripoli,  
22 before you went to Benghazi, can you repeat again, I  
23 apologize, what you knew about the security situation in  
24 Benghazi, how you learned that information?

25 A So there was information, or -- I won't say a



1 paper, but -- or a memo that was put out by, I can't tell if  
2 it was IN -- INL -- I mean, INR, ITA or -- but it was sent  
3 through -- to us through, I believe it was [REDACTED], who  
4 was the regional desk officer for Libya, and it just  
5 highlighted all the different events that are taking place  
6 within Libya.

7 Q Do you recall ever reading anything originating  
8 with the CIA or any of the other three-letter intel agencies?

9 A No.

10 Q Did you talk with the RSO about the security  
11 situation in Benghazi at all?

12 A Before going or while I was in Tripoli?

13 Q I'm sorry. Before going. Did you talk with  
14 Mr. [REDACTED]?

15 A Before going to Benghazi from Tripoli?

16 Q Correct.

17 A No.

18 Q Did you receive any type of intelligence briefing  
19 [REDACTED] while you were in Tripoli before you  
20 went to Benghazi?

21 A About Benghazi?

22 Q About Benghazi prior to your trip.

23 A No.

24 Q Do you know if the Ambassador received such a  
25 briefing?

1           A     I don't know.

2           Q     So on your plane ride from Benghazi to Tripoli, you  
3     said you and Mr. [REDACTED] and the Ambassador sat in a row,  
4     the three of you?

5           A     Yes.

6           Q     What was the general nature of the conversation  
7     that you had?

8           A     We talked about really just general day-to-day  
9     things, you know, we joked about a few different things,  
10    nothing too concrete that stands out, really nothing related  
11    to the mission, or even Libya; more about stateside things,  
12    family.

13          Q     Do you recall him talking about the security  
14    situation at all in Benghazi to you?

15          A     No.

16          Q     Do you recall him talking about anything in  
17    particular he may have been looking forward to during his  
18    time in Benghazi?

19          A     No.

20          Q     So when you arrived at the airport, you mentioned  
21    that there was a close friend of the Ambassador's that was  
22    there to greet him?

23          A     I believe so. And I'm not sure if he was there or  
24    if he was at the mission. I know who -- [REDACTED] was  
25    there, so --

1 Q And would that individual -- whether he was at the  
2 airport or at the mission, is that [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]  
3 [REDACTED]? Does that name ring a bell?

4 A It rings a bell, yes.

5 Q Okay. And is that the individual that you're  
6 talking about?

7 Ms. Safai. Can I -- let me interject here.

8 Mr. Davis. Sure.

9 Ms. Safai. [REDACTED]  
10 [REDACTED].

11 Mr. Davis. Okay.

12 Ms. Safai. [REDACTED]  
13 [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED]

15 Mr. Davis. Okay. We discussed him -- just for your  
16 knowledge, we discussed him by name here in a classified  
17 setting before, and that's part of the reason of why we're in  
18 a classified setting, I believe, is because you said you  
19 wanted to protect the identifies of not only your agents, but  
20 also other individuals?

21 Ms. Safai. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] --  
22 [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED]

1

2

3

4

5

6

BY MR. DAVIS:

7

Q When you traveled from the airport to the Special Mission facility, how many people do you recall being present at the actual Special Mission facility?

10

A I'd say between 11 and 13.

11

Q And those 11 to 13 people, can you break them down by category of individual for us?

12

13

A So I was led to understand that there was three

14

QRF --

15

Q Okay.

16

A -- four unarmed security, there was a cook. I don't -- I know there was a gardener, but I don't know if he was there, but I was told that they have a gardener. I don't know at what point, but the British supervisor for Blue Mountain, what time -- was point he was there or came, but he did come, so I don't know exact -- I don't know if it was that day. Again, those -- some of those memories are kind of convoluted as far as some of those people --

24

Q The --

25

A -- when I met them. Sean Smith was there. And I'm

1 not certain who else was there, no.

2 Q The individual we were talking about earlier, are  
3 you aware whether or not he was employed at the Special  
4 Mission Compound?

5 A Which one?

6 Q The individual we were talking about earlier.

7 A Yes, he was.

8 Q Okay. Do you know what --

9 A As far as I understood.

10 Q Do you know what his position was there?

11 A No.

12 Q Are you aware of -- let me ask this: Out of those  
13 11 to 13 people you just discussed, how many actually lived  
14 at the Special Mission Compound?

15 A The QRF had a residence on the compound.

16 Q Okay.

17 A The cook did not. And I don't know about the  
18 gardener. So that would have been three plus the employees,  
19 the four -- the three agents, Sean Smith and the Ambassador.  
20 That's five. And the principal, [REDACTED], he was the  
21 principal officer at the time.

22 Q When you arrived at the Special Mission Compound,  
23 given the number of people that were there and the general  
24 size of the compound, did you view the compound and think  
25 that there were any security concerns associated with it?

1           A     It was -- it's a big compound, so --

2           Q     Outside of the size, the types of physical security  
3     you saw at the compound, were there things that as you walked  
4     around, you felt could have been improved or things that were  
5     needed that were not there?

6           A     No. I didn't see anything glaring.

7           Q     Are you aware that -- do you have any knowledge of  
8     a translator living at the Special Mission Compound?

9           A     No.

10          Q     An individual by the name of [REDACTED], does that ring a  
11     bell to you?

12          A     Name sounds -- sounds familiar.

13          Q     Okay. And how or why does it sound familiar?

14          A     I may associate him with being a QRF member. I  
15     don't know if he was a translator. I don't know the  
16     specifics, no.

17          Q     What types of discussions did you have with the  
18     other agents who were in Benghazi about the QRF? Did they  
19     express any concerns about the QRF? Were they comfortable  
20     with the force? What can you recall from those  
21     conversations?

22          A     I can't remember.

23          Q     Do you remember any conversations about [REDACTED] in  
24     particular?

25          A     No. I'd only been there a day.

1           Q     When you went over to the Annex on the night you  
2 arrived, can you describe -- you were talking with Heather  
3 earlier that the Ambassador kind of gave a welcoming speech.  
4 Can you describe generally the people who were in the room  
5 for his welcoming speech?

6           A     SO, the GRS, I'd say maybe four or five of them,  
7 support staff and case agents.

8           Q     Was there anything in particular that stood out to  
9 you about the makeup of the individuals in the room?

10          A     No.

11          Q     So after this speech, the Ambassador went to a  
12 meeting with the chief of base, correct?

13          A     As far as I can remember, yes.

14          Q     And you were not present at that meeting?

15          A     No.

16          Q     Did you see anybody else go into the meeting with  
17 the Ambassador and the chief of base?

18          A     None of -- none of my personnel, none of DS.

19          Q     None of DS?

20          A     Or State, no.

21          Q     But do you know if there were any other personnel  
22 that met with the Ambassador and the chief of base?

23          A     I don't.

24          Q     Was the meeting in the same building where you were  
25 at the time or was it in a separate building?

1 A A separate building.

2 Q When was the first time you remember seeing the  
3 Ambassador after you received that briefing?

4 A When we were due to leave.

5 Q And did he make mention of anything discussed in  
6 the briefing?

7 A No.

8 Q What was his demeanor like, the Ambassador's?

9 A I don't know.

10 Q Was it similar to when you arrived at the Annex?  
11 Was it different in any way?

12 A He didn't seem different at all.

13 Q You mentioned very early on that the Ambassador had  
14 a tracking device he carried with him?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Can you describe that tracking device in a little  
17 more detail? [REDACTED]

18 A [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]

20 Q [REDACTED]

21 A [REDACTED]

22 Q And where did the Ambassador generally keep it on  
23 his person?

24 A I don't know. I don't really -- I don't know. I  
25 don't.



1 Q When he made a move off the compound, did he always  
2 have that tracker with him?

3 A I don't know.

4 Q Did he carry the same device with him in Tripoli?

5 A That's what I'm referring to.

6 Q That's what you're referring to?

7 A I'm referring to in Tripoli. I don't -- I'm not  
8 referring to Benghazi.

9 Q Okay.

10 A I don't even know if he had one in Benghazi with  
11 him.

12 Q So you don't know if he brought it down with him --

13 A No, I don't.

14 Q -- from Tripoli?

15 A I don't.

16 Q Okay. Moving ahead to the morning of  
17 September 11th, you had mentioned earlier there was a  
18 surveillance issue?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Can you describe that in a little more detail?

21 A I was told that one of the Blue Mountain Guards had  
22 noticed someone dressed as SSC in a, I think, adjacent  
23 compound to the north surveilling the -- the Special Mission.

24 Q Okay. And what else did you learn about the  
25 surveillance, what type of surveillance it was? What was the

1 individual dressed as the SSC doing?

2 A They just said he was -- I can't remember if he was  
3 just taking -- I don't know if he took photos. I think he  
4 took photos. Again, the details are fuzzy, but just that it  
5 was pretty overt, the surveillance.

6 Q Who did the Blue Mountain Guard report this  
7 information to?

8 A To the ARSOs there. I don't know which one.

9 Q And did you as the ARSOs collectively discuss what  
10 the guard had reported?

11 A With me, they did not. I was getting this  
12 information mainly from [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was the AIC, so he would  
13 keep me informed of what was going on. The ARSOs there, I  
14 was going through them. I'd only been there a day.

15 Q So when you were in Benghazi, who did you report to  
16 in Benghazi?

17 A Well, worked for the RSO, essentially, which would  
18 have been [REDACTED], which was [REDACTED], but if -- whatever they  
19 needed me to do, I would either get that from [REDACTED] or the  
20 AIC.

21 Q So you reported to [REDACTED] and not to [REDACTED], or did you  
22 report to both?

23 A Essentially I would get information from both.  
24 Report to? Yeah, I don't --

25 Q What type of action was taken by the ARSOs after

1       they learned of the surveillance incident?

2           A     From what I -- from what I was told, they were  
3       drafting a dip note to go over to MFA and the query at the  
4       Annex for any possible threats.

5           Q     Do you know --

6           A     And we were awaiting word. And at some point the  
7       chief of station came to the Special Mission and briefed them  
8       on whatever findings he had.

9           Q     When you say, "chief of station," do you mean chief  
10      of base?

11          A     Chief of base.

12          Q     Do you know if any phone calls were made to any  
13      Libyan Government entities about the surveillance incident?

14          A     I don't know.

15          Q     When the chief of base came over that day, did you  
16      have any interactions with him?

17          A     No.

18          Q     Were you present for his briefing?

19          A     No.

20          Q     How many other individuals accompanied the chief of  
21      base when he came over?

22          A     I don't know.

23          Q     Did you talk with any of the GRS -- did any GRS  
24      individuals come over with him?

25          A     I don't know.

1           Q     Did you have any interactions -- prior to the  
2     attack, what were your interactions like with the GRS  
3     personnel on the day of September 11th?

4           A     Mine?

5           Q     Yours personally.

6           A     None.

7           Q     Can you describe your actions on the day of  
8     September 11th? You mentioned the surveillance incident.  
9     About what time in the morning did that occur?

10          A     I don't know. I know that when I -- when I woke  
11     up, I believe it may have been like 8 o'clock or so, I was  
12     told by -- it may have been [REDACTED] that told me about the  
13     surveillance, yes.

14          Q     So it occurred before you had -- you had arisen?

15          A     Yeah. Early.

16          Q     And what did you --

17          A     As far as I was made to understand on that day, I  
18     believe it had occurred earlier that morning.

19          Q     So what did you do on September 11th? All the  
20     Ambassador's needs were on the compound. What was your role  
21     that day?

22          A     I pretty much -- I waited for them, as far as I let  
23     them handle that. They were the ARSOs there. So I pretty  
24     much kind of would transition between the cantina to the TOC  
25     and waited for them to tell me how they needed me to assist

1       them, kind of letting them handle their -- their duties.

2           Q     So when you --

3           A     I did walk the compound at some point, I think it  
4       may have been around 3 o'clock. I went and took a tour again  
5       to look at the walls just general, get the idea of the  
6       layout. I'd go into the TOC periodically. At one point I  
7       just asked them to go over again the disposition of the  
8       compound, you know, on the radio, what would they call, you  
9       know, north side, would they call a Charlie 1, Bravo 1, just  
10      to get an idea so that in a -- in a react-type environment,  
11      react plan, I'd know where to go if I was called to go to  
12      Charlie 1 or Bravo 2 or Charlie 3, so in my head, I knew  
13      where north, south, my cardinal directions.

14          Q     How often did you use your -- you said you were  
15      given a radio when you arrived in Benghazi?

16          A     Yes.

17          Q     Did you use your radio at any time on September 10  
18      or September 11? All prior to the attack is what I'm talking  
19      about.

20          A     No.

21          Q     And you mentioned you had a cell phone?

22          A     Yes.

23          Q     Is that a cell phone you were given in Benghazi or  
24      did you bring it down from Tripoli?

25          A     I had two. So I had my cell phone, my BlackBerry

1 issued to me here in Washington, D.C., and then I had a cell  
2 phone, a local cell phone issued to me in Tripoli.

3 Q I'm sorry. In where?

4 A In Tripoli.

5 Q In Tripoli. Okay. And you brought that local cell  
6 phone with you down to Benghazi?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Do you recall using it -- again, all my questions  
9 are prior to when the attack began. Do you recall using that  
10 on either September 10 or September 11?

11 A I can't recall.

12 Q Did that cell phone have the capability to dial  
13 internationally?

14 A I don't know. I had my BlackBerry. I would use my  
15 BlackBerry to dial internationally if I needed to.

16 Q And your BlackBerry worked?

17 A Yes. I called the command center from my  
18 BlackBerry in DC.

19 Q Is that prior to the attack or --

20 A After the attack.

21 Q After the attack.

22 A During the attack, actually.

23 Q During the attack. You mentioned that you were in  
24 and out of the TOC on September 11. When you were inside the  
25 TOC or even when you were walking around the compound, did

1       you notice at any time any classified documents in hard copy?

2           A     No.

3           Q     You never saw anything about geo-coordinates of a  
4       terrorist camp or militia camp?

5           A     No.

6           Q     You never saw anything about a "Terrorist Wanted"  
7       list?

8           A     No.

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1 BY MR. DAVIS:

2 Q Were you present for -- let me back up. What did  
3 the Ambassador do on September 11? What was his schedule to  
4 the best of your recollection?

5 A He had a few meetings, and I can't recall with  
6 whom. I know the last one was -- the most prominent one was  
7 the -- I believe it was the Turkish CG.

8 Q And prior to the Turkish CG meeting, do you know  
9 who he met with prior to that?

10 A I can't recall.

11 Q Did you ever have any discussions with anybody who  
12 accompanied people who were coming to meet the Ambassador on  
13 September 11?

14 A No.

15 Q When the Turkish CG came, who accompanied him to  
16 the compound?

17 A I don't know.

18 Q You had no discussions with anybody?

19 A Not that I -- I mean, details I can't recall. I  
20 can't remember. A lot of the discussions, much of this stuff  
21 was relayed to me or discussed with me with [REDACTED], who was the  
22 AIC. He would keep me apprised of anything that was changing.

23 Q So when these other delegations or other  
24 individuals come to meet with the Ambassador at the compound,  
25 would it have been [REDACTED] who would have been there present



1 with the Ambassador until the meeting began?

2 A For the meeting?

3 Q For the meeting. I mean, who would have been  
4 present in the meeting? Would it have been typical for [REDACTED]  
5 to have been there? Do you know if he was in the meetings  
6 with the Ambassador?

7 A On the compound it wasn't typical for him to be  
8 with the Ambassador. The Ambassador had free roam on the  
9 compound. There was no requirement for [REDACTED] to be --  
10 accompany him on compound or at those meetings, no.

11 Q Okay. So when you say that you received  
12 information, you would have received information from [REDACTED]  
13 about any changing situation that --

14 A That he was aware of.

15 Q That's simply because he was the AIC and not  
16 because he was --

17 A Well, mostly because he was the AIC, and so I know  
18 he was working on the Ambassador's schedule for the next day,  
19 and so he would be the one that would have the most frequent  
20 contact with the Ambassador to try and iron out and get a  
21 concrete schedule for the next day. So whatever he would  
22 have gleaned from that he would occasionally tell me about.

23 Q When the Turkish delegation came to visit, where  
24 were you?

25 A In the cantina.

1 Q And who were you with?

2 A Throughout the day, you mean?

3 Q At the cantina. Did you know the Turkish  
4 delegation was coming when they came?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Okay. And approximately what time of day was that?

7 A They left at -- I believe they left around  
8 approximately 7, around that time. The time they arrived, I  
9 can't recall exactly when, no.

10 Q Okay. And you were in the cantina when --

11 A More than likely, yeah.

12 Q With who?

13 A [REDACTED] lived in the cantina with me. He had come in  
14 and out. I can't recall who was there at exactly that time,  
15 I can't recall.

16 Q Okay. Do you recall if you had a weapon on your  
17 person?

18 A Yes. I kept my gun with me all the time. It  
19 stayed on me.

20 Q Was that required for you to carry the weapon on  
21 the compound or was that something you did out of habit?

22 A Something I did.

23 Q Okay. Were you issued an M4 when you arrived in  
24 Benghazi?

25 A I was given an M4, yes.

1 Q Okay. And where was the M4? Where was that  
2 normally housed when you were at the Special Mission  
3 Compound?

4 A That would be locked up in the TOC. That day I  
5 actually had taken it from the TOC and moved it to my bedroom  
6 along with ammunition.

7 Q Is there any particular reason you took it from the  
8 TOC to your bedroom?

9 A Just because of the threat and it was September 11.

10 Q When you say the threat, what threat are you  
11 referring to?

12 A Surveillance.

13 Q Okay. Do you know if any of your fellow DS agents  
14 made a similar move?

15 A [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] put his weapon in his room as well.

16 Q Was that something that you and [REDACTED] did in  
17 agreement with one another or did you do that independently  
18 of one another?

19 A We discussed it. Then I think it was just common  
20 concern just to do it.

21 Q Were you and/or [REDACTED] concerned about the  
22 surveillance?

23 A Yeah, it's a concern, surveillance, active  
24 surveillance, yes, but not overly preoccupied with it, no.

25 Q Did you encounter anything like that during your

1 time in Tripoli?

2 A Surveillance?

3 Q Yes.

4 A On the compound?

5 Q Yes.

6 A As far as specifically on the compound, I can't  
7 recall. I know there was surveillance, as I detailed  
8 earlier, with the route, and that was twice. So, yeah, there  
9 was surveillance happening in Tripoli.

10 Q Did you have a television at the compound?

11 A In Benghazi?

12 Q In Benghazi.

13 A There was a television in the common area in the  
14 Ambassador's villa, in Charlie.

15 Q Okay. And did you watch television at all on the  
16 10th or the 11th?

17 A Yeah, I did. On the 11th?

18 Q Yes.

19 A On the 11th I did. Oh, there was a TV in the  
20 cantina. I did watch television a little bit in the cantina.

21 Q Do you recall what you were watching on the 11th?

22 A On the 11th?

23 Q Yes.

24 A In the cantina or in the villa?

25 Q Any time you watched television on the 11th, do you

1 recall what you were watching?

2 A So at one point it was -- I think it was -- it may  
3 have been one of the nighttime shows. I don't know if it was  
4 Jay Leno. But I remember me and the Ambassador discussing at  
5 that time the Olympics. It was right after the Olympics and  
6 there was one woman swimmer that was 17 years old and we were  
7 discussing how gifted an athlete she was. So that was me and  
8 the Ambassador around 7:30, 7, 7-ish.

9 Q P.M.?

10 A P.M., yes.

11 Q Did you become aware at any time during the day on  
12 the 11th that there were protests that were occurring in  
13 Cairo?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And how did you become aware of that?

16 A Someone had told me. I can't recall who.

17 Q Do you remember when you learned?

18 A Exactly when, no.

19 Q Was it before 7:30?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Did you have any discussions about that with the  
22 Ambassador?

23 A About that event? No. And I can't recall the  
24 details of it. Someone came in and mentioned it. I believe  
25 it was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] walked in. He mentioned something about

1        what was happening in Egypt. I don't know what the  
2        Ambassador said. He didn't seem overly preoccupied with it.  
3        And then they also discussed the dip note that was going to  
4        go to MFA. I think he had given it back to him and  
5        highlighted whatever corrections needed to be made before it  
6        went out.

7            Q        But the Ambassador never said anything in your  
8        presence about the protests in Cairo?

9            A        No.

10            BY MS. JACKSON:

11            Q        Let me just ask a couple questions in followup to  
12        that. Did you or any of the other agents get any instruction  
13        regarding -- any instruction to reach out to contacts or take  
14        any security actions in response to the protests going on in  
15        Cairo?

16            A        From where?

17            Q        From anyone. First of all, did you discuss it  
18        among yourselves whether you should take any action?

19            A        We had talked about it. One of the concerns --  
20        pretty much it was general consensus I think was, you know,  
21        just to monitor the situation. You know, I wasn't going to  
22        go to sleep that night. I was probably going to stay up  
23        throughout the night just because, one, it's September 11,  
24        You know, and what was happening in Egypt. So if anything  
25        was to happen, it would happen late at night, early morning.

1       So I wasn't going to go to bed. I believe [REDACTED] was along the  
2       same mindset, but we hadn't ratified whether, yes, this is  
3       what we are doing. It was just people are going to stay up.  
4       I had taken my weapon and ammunition and put it in my room.  
5       [REDACTED] had done the same thing. And I believe they had --  
6       [REDACTED] had his weapon with him as well in his room.

7           Q     Had you reached out to the Annex or to any type of  
8       Libyan intelligence or Libyan law enforcement?

9           A     I did not.

10          Q     Do you know if anyone else did?

11          A     I don't know.

12          Q     Do you know whether anyone else had a conversation  
13       with any members of the Annex as to whether there were any  
14       planned protests in or around the Benghazi area?

15          A     They spoke to the chief of base.

16          Q     And when you say they did?

17          A     I would say the ARSOs spoke to the chief of base  
18       which prompted his, I believe, his trip to the Special  
19       Mission. And since he went what they told me was that there  
20       were no specific threats, same general threats. Benghazi is  
21       a dangerous place. Yeah.

22          Q     So the intelligence in and around Benghazi was that  
23       there was no planned protest?

24          A     I did not hear of a planned protest, no.

25          Q     No one communicated that to you?

1           A     No, I did not hear that.

2           Q     And were you given any instruction from DS  
3 headquarters or Command Center of additional security actions  
4 to take?

5           A     Not that I can remember.

6           Q     Okay. Do you remember any communication coming out  
7 reminding you all that it was the anniversary of September  
8 11, 2001, and to take additional security precautions because  
9 of that date?

10          A     I can't remember.

11          Q     Did the Cairo protests occur during the daytime?

12          A     We are on the same time. I want to say it was  
13 earlier in the day, but I don't know exactly when.

14          Q     Were you able to watch any of it on television?

15          A     I don't recall seeing any of it on television.

16               BY MR. DAVIS:

17          Q     You just said -- you just mentioned that you were  
18 planning on staying up all night on September 11, is that  
19 right?

20          A     As best as I could.

21          Q     What were the reasons for that again?

22          A     Generally just because, you know, it was September  
23 11, you know. I figured better just to stay up just in case  
24 I had to react.

25          Q     I think you said something along the lines of if



1       you thought something would happen it would happen at night?

2           A     Yeah. Early morning.

3           Q     Why did you think that something, if it were to  
4       happen, would happen at night or in the early morning as  
5       opposed to during the day?

6           A     If I wanted to -- I mean, to attack someone, attack  
7       them while they're sleeping would probably be the best time  
8       to attack.

9           Ms. Safai. Did your prior experience have anything to  
10      do with that mindset?

11          Ms. Jackson. Excuse us, but the questions are from us.

12          Ms. Safai. I was trying to help out by clarifying a  
13      point.

14          Mr. [REDACTED] That does come from prior experience. I had  
15      been in Afghanistan when I was in the military, and routinely  
16      when we were attacked it was always at dawn or early morning,  
17      1, 2 in the morning. I had spent a lot of time [REDACTED]  
18      [REDACTED] in Afghanistan, and we were attacked routinely.

19                BY MR. DAVIS:

20          Q     Was there anything, in addition to the fact that it  
21      was September 11 and the fact that there had been  
22      surveillance early that day, that gave you pause that there  
23      might be an attack that night?

24          A     I wasn't expecting an attack, but there are attacks  
25      in Egypt. There's surveillance. So at the bare minimum, I

1 decided just to stay awake.

2 Q So you said you and [REDACTED] both brought your weapons  
3 from the TOC to your rooms. Do you know if any of the other  
4 three ARSOs did that as well?

5 A [REDACTED], he was the TOC agent, he lived in the same  
6 building as the TOC, so his -- all the weapons he had access  
7 to. I know [REDACTED] had his weapon with him in his room in the  
8 villa.

9 Q Do you recall any British diplomats coming over the  
10 evening of September 11?

11 A Yes. They had arrived in the evening. They kept  
12 gear and vehicles on the Special Mission.

13 Q And approximately what time did they come over?

14 A I would say sometime around 7:30.

15 Q Did you have any interaction with any of them?

16 A No.

17 Q Do you know who would have interacted with any of  
18 them?

19 A No, I don't.

20 Q Do you know how long they were there for?

21 A No. I believe they had just left before the  
22 attack.

23 Q Did any of the British individuals mention  
24 anything, to your knowledge, to anybody at the compound about  
25 a protest or a gathering crowd outside of the SMC?

1           A     No.

2           Q     Had there been a protest or a gathering crowd  
3 outside the SMC, what steps would you in particular have  
4 taken?

5           A     That's a very hypothetical question. I don't  
6 really know.

7           Q     If you had noticed something, would you have told  
8 [REDACTED]? Would you have made a phone call? What would you have  
9 done?

10          A     Phone call-wise? I would take the direction from  
11 the RSO as far as what the course of action would be, and I  
12 would support it as necessary.

13          Q     Did you ever encounter anything in high-threat  
14 training or any other training that you had that talked about  
15 what to do in the event of a protest or demonstration?

16          A     In a protest or demonstration in high threat? Not  
17 that I can remember.

18          Q     What about any other DS training that you had? Did  
19 you ever --

20          A     I can't remember any specific actions to take. I  
21 can't remember now.

22          Q     But you would have taken direction from the RSO,  
23 the RSO in Benghazi?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     When did you first learn and where were you that

1       there was an attack?

2           A     I was inside the villa, the Ambassador's villa.  
3       The other three agents had just walked in from outside. I  
4       was sitting down. I was watching TV.

5           Q     And how did you find out about the attack?

6           A     I heard a loud explosion and chanting outside.

7           Q     When you say chanting, what would be --

8           A     Yelling, screaming.

9           Q     Okay.

10          A     I couldn't make out exactly what was said. You  
11       know, I don't know what's memory and what's me just filling  
12       in the blanks.

13          Q     Could you tell whether or not the chanting or the  
14       yelling came from inside the SMC walls or outside of the SMC  
15       walls?

16          A     Inside, very close. You could tell. It was almost  
17       as if someone was outside that door yelling.

18          Q     Could you understand anything that they were  
19       yelling or chanting?

20          A     I don't speak Arabic.

21          Q     What was your first action or reaction when you  
22       heard the chanting and yelling?

23          A     To move. So we all -- I stood up, heard the  
24       explosion, everyone kind of looked at each other real quick,  
25       and then everyone started moving. There was no real

1 discussion about what people were going to do. I think  
2 everyone knew what they needed to do. So I did hear [REDACTED]  
3 say, I have the Ambassador. And then he moved in that  
4 direction. Myself, [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] all left the back of the  
5 villa to head to Villa B and office and the TOC to retrieve  
6 weapons -- I went to retrieve my weapon.

7 Q How far away was the Ambassador from you when the  
8 attack began?

9 A He was inside the villa, so I would say he was  
10 maybe three rooms away.

11 Q Okay. You said you heard a loud explosion. Is  
12 that a similar sound you had heard elsewhere in your  
13 experience?

14 A Yeah. Yeah. I spent a lot of time as an ordnance  
15 disposal technician, so that was pretty common. I could tell  
16 it was fairly close.

17 Q So when you heard the explosion, could you tell  
18 what type of device it was?

19 A No. No. I could tell it was close. I just  
20 couldn't tell what type of device.

21 Q So you went to retrieve your weapon?

22 A Uh-huh.

23 Q And what did you do at that point?

24 A So I moved to B, grabbed the weapon, put on my PPE,  
25 and then tried to make my way to the office. The office was

1 locked. Well, I knocked on the door, didn't get any  
2 response, so I turned around, encountered [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] had,  
3 I believe at this point, put his gear on. And at some point  
4 around this time I believe one of the Blue Mountain guards  
5 secured him. He had kind of run up on us, or run into the  
6 cantina. So we secured him, put him inside the villa.

7 Q When you say you went to retrieve your weapon, are  
8 you referring to your M4?

9 A Yes, I had a 9-mil with me. I had my SIG Sauer  
10 with me while I was inside the Ambassador's villa.

11 Q And when you say PPE you are referring to what  
12 exactly?

13 A Vest and ammunition.

14 Q So you retrieved the Blue Mountain guard who had  
15 ran up behind you?

16 A Uh-huh.

17 Q What happened next?

18 A So we put him inside the villa. And at this point  
19 while I was putting on my vest I retrieved my weapon, at some  
20 point the duck-and-cover alarm went off, so it was a loud  
21 blaring noise. It said duck and cover, seek cover, find  
22 shelter, duck and cover. So at some point when I had come  
23 out, I saw [REDACTED]. He was putting his stuff on. I knocked on  
24 the top door, didn't open. I came back, secured the guard,  
25 and me and [REDACTED] started to -- we were about to make our way

1 back to the Ambassador's villa.

2 At this point you didn't hear a lot of noise. I didn't  
3 hear any yelling or screaming or chanting. It seemed like  
4 everyone was just trying to get their bearings.

5 And then I saw someone in the alleyway. So there was an  
6 alleyway that separated -- this was essentially like this big  
7 compound. It used to be two compounds, so the alleyway  
8 separated the two, and the only way to get to the  
9 Ambassador's side, the Charlie side, was through the  
10 alleyway, which is big enough for a vehicle.

11 So while I was going to make my way back, before I could  
12 make it off the landing, we saw an individual inside the  
13 alleyway. It was pretty dark. I could not see a weapon. So  
14 I really quick, half-second, probably a glance at [REDACTED], I  
15 said, quick nod, I said, is that our guy, while I was trying  
16 to keep visual contact of this gentleman in the alleyway.  
17 And he says, I don't know.

18 So at that point, right after that, I saw about, I would  
19 say, between to me it was 7 and 10, and those were behind  
20 him, coming kind of behind him in sort of a wave, where I saw  
21 weapons, and I could make out AKs and RPGs.

22 Q Is that the first time when you saw the individual  
23 in the alleyway and then the 7 to 10, is that the first time  
24 that you actually saw the attackers?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Going back for a second to the duck-and-cover  
2 alarm, where was the button to actually hit the  
3 duck-and-cover alarm?

4 A In the TOC.

5 Q Okay. So the person in the TOC would have hit the  
6 duck-and-cover alarm?

7 A Yes.

8 Q And that was Agent [REDACTED]?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Did the QRF have a duck-and-cover alarm, to your  
11 knowledge?

12 A I don't know.

13 Q Okay. But the duck-and-cover alarm that you heard  
14 came from the TOC?

15 A As far as I know.

16 Q Is that a standard duck-and-cover alarm that they  
17 have at other posts?

18 A Yes.

19 Q So as you saw the 7 to 10 attackers, you're with  
20 [REDACTED] at this point?

21 A Yes.

22 Q What were your next movements?

23 A I yelled to [REDACTED] to get in the building, because I  
24 knew what I could see, but I didn't know what else was around  
25 me. So it is a pretty large compound, and we are in the



1 middle, essentially, of the compound. Everything behind us  
2 was an ocean, pretty dark. I didn't know where they were  
3 coming from. So it is essentially kind of in the open. Best  
4 place to defend from is inside the building.

5 Q So which building did you go into?

6 A The cantina.

7 Q And when you went into the cantina, where did you  
8 and [REDACTED] -- did [REDACTED] go in the cantina with you?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And where did you go once you were in the cantina?

11 A So inside the cantina there was no hard lock bar.  
12 There was no way to really lock it. And the entire cantina  
13 was just blanket windows and a large almost like screen door,  
14 but they had a bar on it, like it was gated, but it was a  
15 door. So from there we looked at it and we were going to  
16 defend from that building, but there were many windows, you  
17 know, avenues of, you know --

18 Q Entry?

19 A Entry and points of aim. They could have aimed in  
20 and my visibility out was really limited as far as angles of  
21 attack. So we moved in the hallway because there is no way  
22 to shore up that door, so we decided to move into the  
23 hallway. And even in the hallway there are windows pointing  
24 right down the hallway, so you could still fire an RPG or  
25 throw in grenades or whatever, so I was making judgment calls

1 on the fly about what to do at that point, knowing that had  
2 they fired in an RPG I probably wouldn't be able to stay  
3 conscious. I know about overpressure and blast effects.

4 So I yelled to [REDACTED] that we needed to go into my room  
5 because it's the only place that could get barricaded. So  
6 from there, making additional judgment calls, I decided to  
7 tear off freezers from the wall and use one for cover and  
8 then one as a barricade. And then we did that.

9 I gave [REDACTED] my weapon while I lifted these freezers and  
10 pushed them into the room and set them in a way where I could  
11 use one as a barricade that they wouldn't be able to enter  
12 and the other one as cover.

13 So I did that and waited to see what would happen next.  
14 I actually came out from the barricade, walked out into -- to  
15 kind of see what was happening outside, and that's when they  
16 tried to breach the door. So at that point they tried to  
17 breach the door and I went back into the room and went from  
18 there.

19 Q So your room -- you were barricaded in your room?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Do you recall approximately how large your room  
22 was?

23 A No exact dimensions. I would say it is smaller  
24 than this.

25 Q And was a door the only way into your room?

1           A     There were two windows.

2           Q     Okay. And did they have grates on the windows?

3           A     They had grates with quick release. You could  
4 actually get out, you could push out, and then there was a  
5 metal screen that came down.

6           Q     So you said that the attackers who tried to come  
7 into the room were unsuccessful?

8           A     Yes, they tried to breach it one time.

9           Q     And then at what point did you leave the room?

10          A     That wasn't until much later.

11          Q     So how long do you think you were in the room for?

12          A     I'll say maybe an hour.

13          Q     You mentioned earlier that you used your BlackBerry  
14 to call the DS Command Center. When did you first call the  
15 DS Command Center during this sequence of events?

16          A     So before they breached, when they made the first  
17 attempt, the first attempt they didn't breach into the room  
18 yet. But it was imminent that they were going to breach and  
19 they were going to come in. So at that point we bunkered in  
20 and started to proceed making calls. So [REDACTED] was calling  
21 Tripoli and I called the Command Center. I believe it was  
22 18 minutes after the attack.

23          Q     How long were you for on the phone with the Command  
24 Center for?

25          A     Maybe 2 minutes.

1 Q What did you relay to them?

2 A Let them know that we were under attack, the  
3 Ambassador was secure in his villa with one agent, and what  
4 agents were on the ground.

5 Q Did they have any questions for you?

6 A No. No.

7 Q Did you call the DS Command Center at any other  
8 point from when the attack began to when you left the Special  
9 Mission Compound?

10 A I did not.

11 Q Okay. Were you in the room with [REDACTED] when he  
12 called Tripoli?

13 A Yes.

14 Q And do you know who he spoke with at Tripoli?

15 A [REDACTED] (phonetic).

16 Q And approximately how long was this phone call?

17 A I don't know. They were on the phone for a while,  
18 so I can't exactly.

19 Q Longer than 2 minutes?

20 A More than likely.

21 Q When you were barricaded in the room, what could  
22 you hear coming from outside of the room?

23 A As best as I can recall, I heard some explosions,  
24 gunfire, yelling.

25 Q Were your windows open or were they closed?

1 A They were closed. They were closed.

2 Q Were there any smells out of the ordinary?

3 A Not that I can recall.

4 Q The explosions and the gunfire and the chanting,  
5 were those sporadic? Was it constant?

6 A Chanting was pretty -- I mean, was pretty constant.  
7 The gunfire was sporadic, same with the explosions.

8 Q Was the chanting, did that continue directly  
9 outside of your room? Was it outside of the building? Do  
10 you remember?

11 A I can't remember. I can't localize it exactly  
12 where, you know.

13 Q Okay. So at some point you and [REDACTED] left the room?

14 A Yep. That was after we linked up with [REDACTED].

15 Q Okay. How did you link up with [REDACTED]?

16 A He came over to our side and knocked on the door.

17 Q Okay. Did either you or [REDACTED] use any of your  
18 radios? Did you have your radios on you?

19 A Yes.

20 Q Did you use your radios at all?

21 A [REDACTED] was doing a lot of the communication.

22 Q Do you know who he was communicating with?

23 A The TOC, the Benghazi TOC.

24 Q How did you know that it was [REDACTED] who came over and  
25 knocked on the door?

1           A     I opened it. I knew it was [REDACTED]. You mean, before  
2     that?

3           Q     At the time when you finally left the room, you  
4     said [REDACTED] came over?

5           A     How did I know it was him?

6           Q     You knew it was him?

7           A     He said it was [REDACTED].

8           Q     Okay. So he linked up with you and [REDACTED]. And what  
9     did the three of you do at that point?

10          A     Somebody did give me the phone. At one point the  
11     Libyan guard, he had given me a phone while we were in there  
12     because when we were inside the room we had the Libyan guard  
13     with us.

14          Q     Oh, the person who had run up from behind you  
15     earlier?

16          A     Yeah, we had him with us.

17          Q     Okay.

18          A     So while we were in there, he did give me the  
19     phone. And it was one of the other Libyan guards who told us  
20     we were in an attack. So I gave him back the phone. I said,  
21     okay, I got it. Thanks. Appreciate that.

22          Q     So after you --

23          A     And he was taking his clothes off. He had taken  
24     his clothes off. He had taken off his shirt. He had taken  
25     off his boots. I don't know, maybe an effort to fit in. And

1       then he kind of stood in the closet.

2           Q     So after you and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] left the room, where  
3       did you go at that point?

4           A     We went to get a vehicle so that we would have a  
5       mobile platform to have cover. If we were getting engaged,  
6       we would at least have something, some car.

7           Q     And so when you went to get the vehicle, you  
8       obviously left the villa to go outside? I'm sorry, did you  
9       made it to the vehicle?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     Okay. And from your room to the vehicle you exited  
12       the villa and went outside?

13          A     Yep, to the TOC. The keys were in the TOC.

14          Q     The keys were in the TOC. The keys for the vehicle  
15       were in the TOC?

16          A     Yes.

17          Q     Were the keys to all of the vehicles in the TOC?

18          A     I don't know. I don't know. There were a couple  
19       of vehicles that were taken, so I would assume not all of  
20       them.

21          Q     So you went from your room to the TOC to the  
22       vehicle?

23          A     Yes.

24          Q     During your journey from your room to the TOC to  
25       the vehicle, did you see any attackers? Could you hear any

1 chanting?

2 A I heard some gunfire.

3 Q What did you do when the three of you made it to  
4 the vehicle?

5 A We drove to the Ambassador's villa.

6 Q Okay. And what happened when you got to the  
7 Ambassador's villa?

8 A This is not altogether fuzzy, but as far as the  
9 sequence, driving to it, we saw some people enter through the  
10 front gate. We weren't quite sure who it was. So we ended  
11 up backing up, preparing to engage them if we had to, if it  
12 was the attackers. And [REDACTED] recognized someone that may have  
13 been part of the -- had worked there previously or may have  
14 been one of the QRF guards that was -- he just hadn't been  
15 there for a couple of days. Something to that effect. They  
16 knew him. So we were like, okay.

17 So we pulled up to the side of the -- essentially, we  
18 didn't engage because we recognized them, so we pulled up to  
19 the side of the villa. I was in the front seat, myself and  
20 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was driving. Myself and [REDACTED] jumped out, and we  
21 tried to go in through the back entrance by the pool to try  
22 to enter the building. And it was just impossible. The  
23 entire thing was in flames.

24 So looking at the flames, we just couldn't access from  
25 that point, so we backed up and went around the front.



1 Q Was this the first time you were aware the villa  
2 was in flames?

3 A No.

4 Q When did you first learn that the villa was in  
5 flames?

6 A We heard about that while we were inside the  
7 cantina, inside my room.

8 Q And do you remember if that came via radio or via  
9 telephone?

10 A It came via radio.

11 Q Okay. And who was on the other end of the radio?

12 A [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

13 Q So our hour is up. So we can take a break if you  
14 want.

15 Ms. Sawyer. I mean, how much more do you think you have  
16 if you were to continue?

17 Mr. Davis. A little bit.

18 Ms. Jackson. Half an hour or more?

19 Ms. Sawyer. Half an hour?

20 Ms. Jackson. Yeah.

21 Ms. Sawyer. Well, we should take a break, if anyone  
22 needs to take a break, but I would otherwise say we are happy  
23 to have you guys continue. I don't think we have that much.  
24 There may be some follow-on questions we might have, but to  
25 the extent that we are both just interested in hearing what

1 happened, continuing to allow him to proceed and finish this  
2 as quickly as we can I think would be great. So we are more  
3 than happy to have you guys continue.

4 Now, if anyone needs a break we should do it.

5 [Recess.]

6 BY MR. DAVIS:

7 Q Thanks for being so helpful in answering these  
8 questions. I know it may not be easy for you. So we are  
9 going to just give you a roadmap, finish up the discussion of  
10 what happened at the Special Mission Compound, talk briefly  
11 about your trip over to the Annex, talk about your experience  
12 at the Annex, and then some questions about after the attack.  
13 And at least then Sharon and I will be done, just to give you  
14 a hint of where we are going.

15 So before we continue, just a couple of quick questions.  
16 You mentioned that you had called the DS Command Center and  
17 had roughly a 2-minute conversation. During that  
18 conversation do you recall mentioning anything about a  
19 protest?

20 A No.

21 Q You mentioned that another agent -- I think it  
22 might have been [REDACTED] -- you were communicating with on the  
23 radio, or [REDACTED] was communicating with on the radio. Do you  
24 recall either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] over the radio mentioning anything  
25 about a protest?

1           A     No.

2           Q     And you mentioned that [REDACTED] was talking with  
3 Tripoli. You were in the room for that conversation. Do you  
4 recall hearing anything [REDACTED] said regarding the protest at  
5 all?

6           A     No.

7           Q     So where we left off was you had gotten in the  
8 vehicle. You were driving over to the Ambassador's villa.  
9 You saw a group of people entering the gate. [REDACTED] recognized  
10 somebody, so you did not engage. You got to the villa. It  
11 was completely engulfed in smoke and flames. Is all that  
12 correct?

13          A     Yes.

14          Q     All right, so what happened at that point?

15          A     So at that point we walked around the front of the  
16 villa. At some point, I can't remember exactly when, [REDACTED]  
17 was coming down off of the roof from a ladder. We grabbed  
18 him, took him over to the vehicle. He outlined as best as he  
19 could where he had last seen the Ambassador or where he had  
20 -- where he should be. So we started to go in and outside of  
21 the window. So myself and [REDACTED] primarily were going in and  
22 outside of the window searching for him.

23                I walked in. I remember coming back to the vehicle to  
24 leave my weapon at the vehicle with [REDACTED]. And then I went  
25 back into the window looking for Sean Smith and the

1 Ambassador.

2 Q How many times would you say you personally went in  
3 the window to search for them and back out?

4 A I would say a dozen, you know. Well, we had  
5 searched, and then at some point I decided to try to get a  
6 gas mask and not to -- you know, carbon monoxide will still  
7 kill you with a gas mask, a military-style gas mask, but it  
8 was mainly just to filter out the smoke, the soot, because it  
9 would shut your throat, and you couldn't see, couldn't even  
10 really open your eyes. So that was primarily the reason we  
11 went to go get a gas mask. And we may have gone in a few  
12 times prior to that, and then when we came back, at least a  
13 dozen times.

14 Q Where was the gas mask located?

15 A At the TOC.

16 Q And were you able, when you were in trying to  
17 locate the Ambassador, were you able to breathe or were you  
18 holding your breathe the entire time that you went in?

19 A You couldn't breathe, so you'd hold your breath and  
20 go in, and with the gas mask you'd take real shallow breaths,  
21 you know, kind of keep it away from your face, take shallow  
22 breaths as best as you could.

23 Q How would you describe the visibility inside the  
24 building?

25 A Almost as if you had your eyes closed. You really

1       couldn't see in front of your face. If you had your hand  
2       inside the room -- so there were two rooms, you walked into  
3       the main bedroom and you'd try to go into the adjacent rooms,  
4       one where the window we were accessing, you could see  
5       somewhat. It was really obscure, but you could see. But  
6       then once you went into the main hallway to where the  
7       Ambassador should have been, you couldn't see anything. You  
8       couldn't see your hand in front of your face.

9           Q     So at some point you guys stopped looking for the  
10       Ambassador. When did that point occur, and what did you do  
11       next?

12          A     That was later. So I would say that's maybe about  
13       35 minutes later, about, approximately. And you said --

14          Q     What did you do next once you stopped looking for  
15       him?

16          A     At that point when we decided to stop searching, we  
17       left the compound, the Special Mission.

18          Q     What was your interaction like, if any, with the  
19       GRS folks at the compound?

20          A     Everybody was kind of helping out with the search.  
21       So there was one, [REDACTED], he was helping us search. We  
22       actually, myself and [REDACTED] found the body of Sean Smith. [REDACTED]  
23       had come out. I was searching. I guess I walked right over  
24       him. [REDACTED] went right in behind me and then he yelled out he  
25       found Sean. So I went into that room, and we drug his body

1 out, handed him to one of the GRS folks. He was there with  
2 [REDACTED]. So we all were just kind of helping each other. They  
3 were really trying to access from the front doors of the  
4 villa. Myself and [REDACTED] were going through the bedroom  
5 primarily, we were the primary two. And then [REDACTED] as well.  
6 He would go in with us too.

7 Q So when did you first see the GRS folks at the  
8 compound? Was it before you began looking for the body? Was  
9 it when you reached the car? At what point do you first  
10 remember seeing them?

11 A I can't remember when I first saw them. It was  
12 really prominent when I was searching and on the landing that  
13 I started to pay attention to where they were at. I had  
14 heard on the radio that they were somewhere in the vicinity.  
15 So they may have been in that first group that came in that  
16 we'd almost engaged, but, again, I'm not certain.

17 Q Do you remember at this point, or at any other  
18 point throughout the evening, did you ever remember hearing  
19 any of the GRS individuals mentioning anything about a  
20 protest?

21 A No.

22 Q So you mentioned that you left the compound. Who  
23 was in your vehicle when you left the compound?

24 A All five agents.

25 Q All five DS agents?

1           A     Yes.

2           Q     And you left the compound. And describe your ride  
3 from the compound. I presume you went to the Annex, right?

4           A     Yes.

5           Q     So describe your ride from the compound to the  
6 Annex.

7           A     So as we were leaving, I had just -- I was sitting  
8 in the back center and heard some gunfire, and before I  
9 could, you know, blink, we were moving. I guess the Annex  
10 guy had said, hey, you know, go ahead and get out of here,  
11 we're right behind you.

12                So we made a right to head east down this main road.  
13 And on our way there, you know, you could see just armed men  
14 along the roadway. And then we also passed a compound, I  
15 think it was one compound down where what was described to me  
16 is that benign militia had been.

17                So the first pass we didn't pay much attention to the  
18 militia, but we saw something that appeared to be a roadblock  
19 at the end of the road. So we decided to turn around. And  
20 as we were going back in the other direction, there was  
21 someone standing right outside the gates of the Special  
22 Mission, kind of waving us away. So we didn't really know  
23 how to interpret that. We didn't know if the attack was  
24 coming from the other side, if that's where [inaudible] was  
25 located, so we turned around again.

1           And at that point we slowed down close to, probably  
2 going around 15 miles an hour, close to that militia, and  
3 they came up to the window. And we were about to grab the  
4 diplomatic plate just to let them know who we were. They  
5 just looked in the window and they just opened fired.

6           Q     When you say they opened fire, did they open fire,  
7 do you recall what kind of weapons they had?

8           A     AKs.

9           Q     What they were firing at?

10          A     AKs. So he had an AK, the gentleman who was right  
11 at our window, I would say maybe 4 feet. He had an AK. So  
12 he looked -- [REDACTED] was in the front passenger seat, so he  
13 looked at [REDACTED] and he started firing right into his window.

14          Q     And who was driving?

15          A     [REDACTED] was driving.

16          Q     So when this individual started firing on the  
17 vehicle, what happened then?

18          A     We started driving as fast as we could, and you  
19 heard a couple of explosions almost as if they tried to roll  
20 an explosive underneath the vehicle. So at that point there  
21 was just gunfire. You could see and hear the impacts on the  
22 window.

23          Q     What was the approximate amount of time between  
24 when the militia engaged you and you arrived at the Annex?

25          A     I would say maybe 2 minutes. As we were leaving



1       that road, there is the roadblock. There was enough room to  
2       get the vehicle through. We make a right, hit traffic, so at  
3       that point everybody kind of was preparing to either get out  
4       of the vehicle and have to fight on foot, but [REDACTED] pulled it  
5       up on a curb, on a median, ended up high centered, so the  
6       wheels were spinning. At that point we were -- again,  
7       everybody was kind of feeling possibly to engage if they had  
8       to, but then he managed to get traction and pulled it over  
9       the median, and then drove down the road, made a left,  
10      another right, he made it to the Annex.

11       Q     What type of weapons were you able to take with you  
12      on the fly from the compound?

13       A     I had an M4. I don't know if anyone had anything  
14      else different. Should have had M4s.

15       Q     So after the median incident, did you encounter any  
16      other resistance between that point and when you actually  
17      made it to the Annex?

18       A     No. We were just trying to make sure we weren't  
19      followed.

20       Q     Were you followed?

21       A     Not as far as I know.

22       Q     When you got to the Annex, describe what happened  
23      next.

24       A     So we were at the Annex. We drove in. Two of the  
25      tires were flat. The vehicle was littered with bullet holes.

1       There was a gentleman there, I believe his name was -- I  
2       believe it was [REDACTED], but he just -- he said -- he gave me a  
3       radio. I went up to him. I said, what do you need me to do.  
4       And he asked me to go up to the far corner of their compound.  
5       We had two Libyans, helped provide security. So he gave me a  
6       radio and then off I went.

7           Q     Let's back up for one second. You mentioned you  
8       called the DS Command Center. During your time, at any time  
9       between when the attack started and when you arrived at the  
10      Annex did you talk with anybody else outside of DS agents and  
11      the GRS agents?

12           A     Myself?

13           Q     Yes.

14           A     No.

15           Q     Okay.

16           A     You mean as far as 17th February or any of those  
17      people?

18           Q     Correct, whether in person, on the radio, via  
19      telephone?

20           A     No, not via telephone. I mean, they were all  
21      around as we were trying to search for the Ambassador and  
22      Sean Smith. So they were everywhere, you know. They would  
23      say something to me, and I would just go about my business.

24           Q     The 17th February individuals?

25           A     Yes.

1           Q     So you were at the Annex, you are told to go to the  
2     corner of the compound with the two Libyans to help with  
3     security?

4           A     Uh-huh.

5           Q     You did that, I presume?

6           A     Yes.

7           Q     And how long were you in that position for?

8           A     I was only there for a few minutes and then he  
9     called me back so that -- then he asked me to take a position  
10    on the roof, and that's where I went. I went to the roof and  
11    stayed there.

12          Q     Do you know what villa or what building you were  
13    at, at this point on the roof?

14          A     After looking at some of the information I believe  
15    it was, like, A. But it was the northeast one, northeast  
16    villa.

17          Q     So you're up on the roof. What did you take with  
18    you up to the roof?

19          A     I had my sidearm, which was a SIG Sauer, and then I  
20    had my M4 from the Embassy -- or I mean from the Special  
21    Mission.

22          Q     So once you get up to the roof, who was up there on  
23    the roof with you?

24          A     I believe it was just me.

25          Q     Just you?

1 A Until the GRS arrived it was just me.

2 Q And how long were you up there for by yourself?

3 A Could have been 10 minutes, maybe 15.

4 Q And then the GRS arrived?

5 A Yes.

6 Q How many people came up to the roof with you?

7 A Two.

8 Q And what happened at that point?

9 A Then we all stayed on the roof, and then we had  
10 areas of responsibility.

11 Q Okay.

12 A So they had the -- kind of the northwest by the T  
13 intersection, that was their area of responsibility, and I  
14 was postured in the other direction. I would say more south.

15 Q Did you see anything unusual? Did you do anything  
16 during this time period other than observe and be on guard?

17 A Well, we were engaged a few times.

18 Q Okay.

19 A So we were taking fire throughout the night. When  
20 the GRS arrived they asked me if I knew how to use -- they  
21 had a [REDACTED] weapon, machine gun, essentially. So  
22 they had one, they asked me if I knew how to fire it, and I  
23 said, yeah, I know, I'm qualified on that piece of equipment.  
24 So they gave it to me and I had that. And then at some  
25 point, maybe an hour on the roof, the gentleman with me

1 starts to open fire.

2 Q I'm sorry, who opened fire?

3 A The GRS guys on the roof.

4 Q Oh, okay.

5 A Yeah, they opened fire. I didn't have night  
6 vision. I really couldn't see who was coming. So they had  
7 night vision, and they could see that there were people  
8 encroaching.

9 Q Did they offer you night vision? Do you know if  
10 they had any extras?

11 A I asked. I actually asked. And I thought it was  
12 one of the stupidest things I could ask for with what was  
13 going on. I said, hey, do you have it. It was kind of like,  
14 hey, can I get a Ferrari? I said, do you have night-vision  
15 goggles for me? And he looked at me and he said, I don't  
16 know.

17 But one of them actually did get me night-vision  
18 goggles. It was funny. He actually went down. He had to  
19 go -- I guess he had to go downstairs for something, and he  
20 came back up, he had a pair of night-vision goggles for me.  
21 Unfortunately, as he handed them to me, his broke. And then  
22 he said, man, my goggles broke. And for a split second I was  
23 just going to say, oops, too bad for you. But I gave him  
24 back his other ones. I said, here you go. So then again I  
25 was without night vision.

1 Q So you said you were up on the roof for an hour.  
2 You were manning the [REDACTED] weapon?

3 A Yes.

4 Q At what point in the evening did your posture on  
5 the roof change?

6 A As far as how we were getting engaged?

7 Q As far as you personally. How long were you up on  
8 the roof for?

9 A I was there all night.

10 Q You were there all night.

11 A There were three of us on the roof.

12 Q Okay.

13 A And again, our areas of responsibilities were  
14 more where we were getting the initial attack from. So we  
15 were getting attacked from, they had that sector -- those  
16 sectors of sectors. And at some point I was there with  
17 [REDACTED]. So [REDACTED] left the roof to go to a different roof, and  
18 then I took up his sector of fire.

19 Q Was anything outside of the walls? Could you see  
20 anything? Was anything happening at this point? Was it  
21 quiet?

22 A There were periods, but we did get engaged a couple  
23 times. So, you know, as far as being it was an outline, as  
24 far as timeframes when we did, it would be hard for me to  
25 tell you exactly when. I just know that --

1 Q Just all one blur?

2 A Not so much a blur, it's just the first hour we  
3 ended up getting attacked, but I can't tell you whether -- I  
4 know there was explosions, there was RPG, but I can't  
5 remember exactly at what point in the attack was it RPG or  
6 the explosion. I know that they were starting to encroach on  
7 the Annex and they started opening fire from my roof. I  
8 would go over there to assist them, ask what they need,  
9 because I did have a [REDACTED] weapon, but I needed  
10 them to -- they would have to designate where -- but they  
11 were like, hey, we have it, we have it, so I would go back to  
12 my corner and watch my sector.

13 Q So you were on your roof all night?

14 A Yep. I left -- I went to use the restroom just  
15 once. So I left for probably about 5 minutes.

16 Q Okay. And it was [REDACTED] and one other GRS  
17 individual up on the roof with you?

18 A Yes.

19 Q And then at some point [REDACTED] left?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And then it was you and the other GRS individual?

22 A Yes.

23 Q At what point did you --

24 A When did I come off the roof?

25 Q When did you come off the roof?

1           A     About 5:30. It was right after morning prayer.

2           Q     Okay. So you were on the roof -- you were on the  
3 roof when the mortar attacks came?

4           A     I was coming off the roof. So I was actually on  
5 the ladder when the mortar attack came in.

6           Q     Okay. And why were you on your way off the roof at  
7 that point?

8           A     So prior to that we ended up getting, you know,  
9 people had arrived from Tripoli. So they just all of a  
10 sudden they were like, hey, I just assumed that we were going  
11 back to the Special Mission for whatever reason, you know,  
12 possibly to search for the Ambassador, whatever it was, but I  
13 didn't have all of the details about what was going on, so I  
14 assumed that. And that's why I was called down off the roof.

15          Q     So you were on the ladder when the first mortar  
16 attack hits. Did you know immediately it was a mortar  
17 attack?

18          A     Pretty much.

19          Q     Okay. Are mortar attacks obvious, based on your  
20 explosives background?

21          A     Yeah, I mean, that would be -- it would be an RPG  
22 or a mortar. And, you know, RPG, it is line of sight.  
23 Mortar is indirect fire weapon. So for us it would have to  
24 be a mortar is the only thing I could surmise, that it would  
25 have to be a mortar.



1           Q    So you are on the ladder, first mortar attack  
2 comes. Your response was what?

3           A    I knew everyone was located inside the SCIF. I  
4 didn't know that the SCIF was the building getting hit. So I  
5 moved into the SCIF.

6           Q    Did another mortar attack occur by the time you  
7 were able to make it inside the SCIF?

8           A    By the time I was inside the SCIF? Then, yeah.  
9 They were coming pretty frequent. I don't know if it was a  
10 minute apart, but they were coming pretty fast. So I was in  
11 the SCIF a minute. The SCIF ended up getting hit with  
12 additional mortars.

13          Q    But you were on the outside for the first mortar  
14 attack?

15          A    Yes, for the first mortar.

16          Q    For the first mortar.

17          A    Yes.

18          Q    So you are in the SCIF. Approximately how many  
19 people are in the SCIF with you, if you can remember?

20          A    I would say it's, you know, more than seven or  
21 eight.

22          Q    And how large an area was the SCIF?

23          A    I can't tell you. I mean, it was three or four  
24 rooms, a villa. So --

25          Q    So much larger than this room?

1           A     Yeah. Maybe four of these rooms.

2           Q     Okay. So you are in the SCIF. Are you aware that  
3 there are additional mortars occurring outside?

4           A     Yeah. I always knew the SCIF was getting hit with  
5 mortars.

6           Q     So when the mortar hit the SCIF it was obvious.

7           A     Yeah, I could feel it.

8           Q     Okay. What were people doing inside the SCIF when  
9 you arrived?

10          A     There was a flurry of activity. I mean, exactly  
11 what they were doing? I know there were some people  
12 monitoring radio traffic, but I can't give you with any  
13 specificity what each person was doing.

14          Q     How many people inside the SCIF do you recall being  
15 able to recognize or knowing their names?

16          A     Names?

17          Q     Yeah.

18          A     None, you know. I just knew them by face. I had  
19 met the majority of them the day prior when the Ambassador  
20 spoke to everyone.

21          Q     Was there anybody there that you do not recall  
22 having seen before?

23          A     No, not that I can recall.

24          Q     Okay. So at what point do you come out of the  
25 SCIF?

1           A     When it was time to leave.

2           Q     And how did you know it was time to leave?

3           A     It was pretty obvious. You know, everybody was --  
4     at this point everybody was making plans on leaving, and the  
5     decision had been made, you know, that they find vehicles,  
6     get in vehicles, load up.

7           Q     Do you know who had made the decision to leave?

8           A     Do I know exactly who? No.

9           Q     Okay. When you entered the SCIF, was it dark or  
10    was it light outside?

11          A     It was light. It was fairly light.

12          Q     But when you went in the SCIF the first time.

13          A     No. It was fairly light. I believe the sun had  
14    come up, started coming up.

15          Q     And when you left the SCIF was the sun all the way  
16    up by that point?

17          A     I don't remember.

18          Q     You don't remember?

19          A     No, I don't.

20          Q     So you leave the SCIF and what happened next?

21          A     So we drive to the airport. So we load up the  
22    vehicles --

23          Q     Right.

24          A     -- with the injured and the deceased. And we start  
25    to make our way to the airport with another militia

1 supporting us.

2 Q How large was the convoy of vehicles that you took  
3 to the airport?

4 A I would say it was eight vehicles, maybe.

5 Q Can you remember who you were in the vehicle with?

6 A Yeah, it was myself, [REDACTED], and then two people  
7 from the Annex [REDACTED].

8 Q Do you remember who the two people were from the  
9 Annex?

10 A No.

11 Q Do you know the militia that took you to the  
12 airport? Do you remember anything about them?

13 A They had a lot of vehicles. Technicals. So it was  
14 a pretty large militia. That's the only significant detail  
15 that I remember, that it was large, a very large militia.

16 Q How long, approximately, how long was the trip from  
17 the Annex to the airport?

18 A Roughly 30 minutes.

19 Q Did you encounter any type of resistance along the  
20 way?

21 A No resistance. There was something at the airport,  
22 there were some arguments, I believe, between militias,  
23 because there was just a lot of yelling and screaming at the  
24 airport.

25 Q At the airport?

1           A     At the airport, yeah.

2           Q     Okay.

3           A     Well, between two militias. So it was just a  
4 little hectic as far as, you know.

5           Q     Do you have any idea what those arguments were  
6 about?

7           A     Not at all.

8           Q     Was there a plane already at the airport when you  
9 arrived?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     And approximately how long after you arrived at the  
12 airport did that plane depart?

13          A     It took a while just because the pilots were having  
14 issues with -- we had to load equipment, load people on. So  
15 maybe 30 minutes, maybe more.

16          Q     Were you on that first plane that left?

17          A     Yes.

18          Q     When you arrived at the airport were there any  
19 other people that looked like they might be American citizens  
20 already at the airport?

21          A     I don't remember.

22          Q     Do you know how many people were on that first  
23 plane with you going back to Tripoli?

24          A     I don't. I can guess a dozen, but it was enough.

25          Q     Was there anybody on that plane that you had not

1       previously seen?

2           A     Not that I recall.

3           Q     So to the best of your recollection, everybody on  
4       your plane you had either seen from the Special Mission  
5       Compound or from the Annex?

6           A     Yes.

7           Q     So you take the plane from Benghazi to Tripoli.  
8       What happened when you arrived at Tripoli?

9           A     So while on the plane, I was treating [REDACTED] and  
10       [REDACTED]. They both had been pretty severely injured. So I was  
11       in the back with them applying pressure and then checking  
12       tourniquets, just assessing the overall health condition.  
13       And then when we landed I started to pull [REDACTED] from the  
14       plane, and at that point the doctors from Tripoli took over.

15          Q     Who else did you talk with on the plane besides  
16       [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]? Was there anybody else attending to their  
17       situation?

18          A     Yeah. One of the GRS people from Tripoli was there  
19       helping out. He had assisted me -- provided medical  
20       assistance to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] while we were inside the SCIF.  
21       So I had kind of been, from the moment they brought him in, I  
22       kind of monitored their condition. So that Tripoli GRS  
23       person was in the back of me. One of the case agents was  
24       there with me as well, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] helped out. [REDACTED] helped  
25       comfort [REDACTED]. And in the back, I don't know who else was

1       there. I can't remember who else. Sitting in the back of  
2       the plane with myself.

3           Q     So it was you, it was the two wounded. It was the  
4       ██████ case agent. And it was the GRS individual from  
5       Tripoli?

6           A     Yeah. And there was another GRS gentleman there,  
7       but I just can't remember exactly who.

8           Q     So was it just the six of you in the back of the  
9       plane?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     Did you go to the front of the plane at all?

12          A     I did not, no.

13          Q     Okay. Do you remember having any conversations  
14       about a protest at all?

15          A     No.

16          Q     Do you recall ever hearing the word protest on that  
17       plane ride?

18          A     No.

19          Q     So you said you arrived in Tripoli. The doctors  
20       came and took ██████ body. And what did you do at that  
21       point?

22          A     I moved into a vehicle to go to -- at this point  
23       everyone in Tripoli from the CMR had went to the Annex. They  
24       were all located at the Annex. So we took a Suburban to the  
25       Annex, and from there I helped out as I could.

1           Q     All right. So who was in the vehicle, if you can  
2 remember, going from the airport to the Annex?

3           A     I can't remember.

4           Q     Okay. So you arrived at the Annex. Approximately  
5 how many people, if you can remember, were there?

6           A     All the Annex personnel and I believe almost  
7 everyone from the CMR and Embassy. So dozens.

8           Q     Dozens. And when you arrived at the Annex, what  
9 did you do? What role did you play?

10          A     I talked to the RSO and asked him really what did  
11 they need me to do. And at some point I went to -- so the  
12 other people were coming in on the C-130 along with the  
13 bodies, and I decided to go assist with that.

14          Q     So you actually went back from the Annex to the  
15 airport?

16          A     Yes.

17          Q     Okay. Do you remember who you talked with at the  
18 Annex in this interim period?

19          A     No.

20          Q     So how long were you at the Annex before you went  
21 back to the airport?

22          A     I don't know.

23          Q     So when you arrived at the airport and the C-130  
24 also arrived did you notice anybody getting off of the C-130  
25 that you had not seen before?



1           A     No. I mean -- no. I knew everybody, even the DOD  
2 bodies. I had seen them in Tripoli. So there was no one I  
3 didn't recognize, to the best of my recollection, no.

4           Q     Who you did not recognize?

5           A     There was no one I didn't recognize to the best of  
6 my recollection.

7           Q     And how long were you at the airport for this  
8 second time when you went to greet the C-130?

9           A     I don't know. It could have been an hour or a  
10 half-hour.

11          Q     And then you went from the airport to go back to  
12 the Annex?

13          A     Back to the Annex, yes.

14          Q     Do you remember who rode with you on the way back?

15          A     Yes. There was the two DOD guys and one other DS  
16 agent. I just don't remember who.

17          Q     And do you have any recollection of what your  
18 discussions were from the airport back to the Annex?

19          A     No discussions.

20          Q     No discussions, just silence?

21          A     Yeah.

22          Q     So when you arrived back at the Annex the second  
23 time, what did you do at that point?

24          A     I started to -- because from what I understand the  
25 plan was for everyone to evac to Germany, and all of my

1 belongings were at the CMR. So I decided, you know, I asked  
2 to go to the CMR. So they made it possible. Myself, I can't  
3 remember -- myself and an SST, one of the guys from SST, and  
4 another agent, I believe it was [REDACTED], I believe all three of  
5 us went to the CMR to retrieve our belongings.

6 Q Do you recall at all what type of discussions you  
7 had with [REDACTED] going back to the CMR?

8 A I can't remember, no.

9 Q And how long were you at the CMR for?

10 A Maybe a half-hour.

11 Q And then from the CMR, what did you do next?

12 A Went back to the Annex. May have ate something,  
13 and I took a shower, and prepared to go to Germany.

14 Q And how long were you at the Annex for on this  
15 occasion before you began your departure for Germany?

16 A A few hours, a few to several hours.

17 Q During any of this time, back and forth from the  
18 airport, back and forth from the CMR, your time at the Annex,  
19 do you recall having any conversations at all that mentioned  
20 or related to a protest?

21 A No.

22 Q Do you remember having any conversations at all  
23 about who may or may not have been responsible for the  
24 attacks?

25 A No.

1 Q When did you first learn that you were going to get  
2 evacuated to Germany?

3 A I can't recall if it was after I returned from the  
4 airport the second time. I don't know.

5 Q Okay. Before you began your evacuation, did you  
6 meet with anybody from the CIA at the Annex? Did you have  
7 any discussions with anybody about what had occurred --

8 A No.

9 Q -- in Benghazi?

10 A No.

11 Q So you were never debriefed in any way, either  
12 informally or informally when you were at the Annex?

13 A No.

14 Q Did you ever recall seeing the chief of station or  
15 the deputy chief of station?

16 A No.

17 Q When you went from the Annex to the airport to  
18 evacuate to Germany, how many other people went with you?

19 A [REDACTED] The bulk of the mission was leaving.

20 Q And how was that transportation provided?

21 A Suburbans.

22 Q Suburbans.

23 When you arrived at the airport in Tripoli, was the  
24 plane there waiting for you?

25 A Say again?

1           Q     When you arrived at the airport in Tripoli for your  
2 evacuation --

3           A     Okay.

4           Q     -- was the plane already there waiting for you?

5           A     No. I don't believe so, no. We had to wait. We  
6 had to wait.

7           Q     Do you recall how long having to wait?

8           A     No.

9           Q     Do you recall what time of day it was at this point  
10 when you went to the airport to evacuate?

11          A     I'd say it was afternoon.

12          Q     So on your plane ride from Tripoli up to Germany,  
13 do you recall who you sat next to at all?

14          A     No.

15          Q     Okay. On that plane ride, do you recall speaking  
16 to anybody about what had happened in Benghazi?

17          A     No.

18          Q     Do you recall speaking to anybody at the Annex  
19 about what had happened in Benghazi?

20          A     No.

21          Q     When you arrived in Germany what happened?

22          A     So we arrived and we ended up going to the base.  
23 We were on the base. We ended up kind of getting in  
24 processed by the base. We were given rooms. I can't  
25 remember who was there to speak to us, but someone was there

1 to speak to us, high ranking at the State Department. I  
2 believe it was Burns, as I recall. I can't remember, again,  
3 timeframes, that type of thing.

4 So we ended up getting -- we were given rooms, and then  
5 just given instruction on what to expect next, you know,  
6 trying to figure out how it was going to work, like who was  
7 going to go where from Germany, and that we were going to  
8 speak to the FBI.

9 Q Were you told that you were going to speak to the  
10 FBI as soon as or shortly after you landed or did that  
11 conversation occur later on?

12 A I would say a little bit later on.

13 Q So the first night that you were in Germany you had  
14 a hotel room?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Did you remain alone? Did you talk with any of  
17 your other DS agents? Did you talk with any GRS individuals?  
18 What did you do that first night you were in Germany?

19 A The first night we actually all went to -- it might  
20 have been Applebee's. So we all walked to Applebee's, and,  
21 yeah, we spoke.

22 Q You spoke about the attack or you just spoke in  
23 general?

24 A In general. If we spoke about the attack I  
25 couldn't recall. Or any details we spoke about I can't

1       remember now.

2               Q     Okay. So you spent the night at the hotel. You  
3       woke up the next morning. What happened when you woke up the  
4       next morning? What instructions were you given? What did  
5       you do?

6               A     Pretty much it was waiting for a decision about  
7       what we were going to do next, how it was going to work out.  
8       When we would talk to the Bureau, whether we would be going  
9       back to the States. I asked to go back to Tripoli so I could  
10      finish out my TDY. And then trying to figure out if that was  
11      going to happen, if they would let me go back to Tripoli.

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1 Q Who did you ask, specifically? Do you recall?

2 A I probably related to the RSO that was there.

3 Q And was that denied or were you granted permission  
4 to do that at some point?

5 A To go back?

6 Q To go back.

7 A No, they pretty much said I wasn't going to be able  
8 to go back to -- because there were a few things that needed  
9 to happen. I needed to talk to the Bureau. Yeah.

10 Q Do you recall -- backing up for a second, once you  
11 first arrived in Tripoli after you took the flight from  
12 Benghazi, do you recall making any phone calls on your  
13 BlackBerry between the time you arrived in Tripoli and the  
14 time you left Tripoli on September 12?

15 A Yeah.

16 Q Who did you call?

17 A I called my wife.

18 Q Did you mention anything to your wife about whether  
19 or not a protest had occurred?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. When you arrived in Germany, do you recall  
22 making any phone calls on the night of September 12?

23 A No. I can't recall any phone calls, no.

24 Q When was the first time that you sat down with  
25 somebody from the Department of Justice from the State

1 Department, from the CIA, from any other United States  
2 Government agency to actually talk about what had transpired  
3 during the attack?

4 A Well, we talked to a -- and I can't remember the  
5 days, which day I don't know if it was before I spoke to the  
6 FBI. I think that was 3 days after we had arrived. And  
7 again, I'm not quite certain. And at some point I only spoke  
8 to two people. One was FBI, [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED]

10 Q In the intermittent 3 days between when you arrived  
11 in Germany and when you spoke with the FBI, what did you do  
12 during those 3 days?

13 A I decompressed, saw a movie.

14 Q Do you remember having any conversations with any  
15 GRS personnel about the attack?

16 A We spoke at Applebee's, yeah.

17 Q Okay. Do you remember -- do you recall any GRS  
18 personnel mentioning to you that they had been delayed in  
19 getting to the Special Mission Compound?

20 A No. No specifics, no. One gentleman just said we  
21 are sorry it took us so long to get there. That was all.

22 Q All right. Who was that individual? Do you  
23 remember?

24 A I believe it was the other gentleman on the roof  
25 with me.



1 Q Either [REDACTED], or the other individual?

2 A Or the other guy. It wasn't [REDACTED]. The other guy.

3 Q Do you recall ever having any conversations or  
4 being near any conversations with the Deputy Chief of Base  
5 from the time that you left Benghazi, to your time in  
6 Germany?

7 A No.

8 Q No? Okay. Your interview with the FBI,  
9 approximately how long did that interview take place?

10 A [REDACTED].

11 Q How many people with the FBI did you speak with?

12 A So it was AUSA, an FBI agent, and a gentleman from  
13 our agents from DS PII.

14 Q What is PII?

15 A Protective Intelligence and Investigations.

16 Q So it was you and the three of them?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Was this conversation recorded at all, either  
19 video, or with a tape recorder?

20 A Not that I can remember.

21 Q So it was did the three of them take notes?

22 A Yes.

23 Q [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]

1 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
2 Q [REDACTED]  
3 [REDACTED]  
4 A [REDACTED]  
5 Q [REDACTED]  
6 [REDACTED]  
7 A [REDACTED]  
8 Q On what day do you remember flying back to the  
9 States?  
10 A I don't remember how long I had been there. I  
11 think I was in Germany 4 days, perhaps.  
12 Q So it was a day, day after the FBI interview, give  
13 or take?  
14 A Give or take.  
15 Q Okay. At any point during your time in Germany,  
16 did you ever see General Carter Ham?  
17 A Yeah, I believe he had come down on the first  
18 day --  
19 Q Okay.  
20 A -- just to welcome everyone who had been evacuated  
21 from Tripoli.  
22 Q Okay. And where were you? Where did this take  
23 place?  
24 A At the meeting, like in processing center.  
25 Q Did he say anything to the group?

1           A     I can't recall what. But he probably -- he did  
2 address the crowd, yes.

3           Q     Okay, for approximately how long, do you know?

4           A     I can't recall.

5           Q     But you don't recall anything about what he said?

6           A     No. No.

7           Q     Was that the only time you saw General Ham during  
8 the time?

9           A     I can't recall if it was when we were leaving when  
10 we saw him again, I can't recall. You know, again, that's a  
11 bit blurry. He may not have even been there. It may have  
12 been the day after or the day we were leaving, the farewell.

13          Q     Did you only see him once or was it possibly twice?

14          A     Possibly twice.

15          Q     Okay. Were you aware when you were in Tripoli of  
16 any other -- let me ask you this: Were you aware of any  
17 contractors, State Department contractors being present in  
18 Tripoli?

19          A     No.

20          Q     And what about in Benghazi? Were you aware that  
21 there were any State Department contractors in Benghazi?

22                Ms. Safai. Can I ask you to clarify the first question.  
23 What timeframe are you referring to?

24                BY MR. DAVIS:

25          Q     Sure. During your entire time in Tripoli from when

1       you first arrived in the second week of August until the time  
2       you evacuated to Germany, were you aware of any State  
3       Department contractors either in or around Tripoli, or in or  
4       around Benghazi?

5           A     That did not reside on the CMR? Anyone that --  
6       contractors working for State that did not reside on the CMR,  
7       is that what you are saying?

8           Q     Yes. That's correct.

9           A     No, no.

10          Q     Were you aware of any contractors for State that  
11       did reside on the CMR?

12          A     No.

13          Q     Okay. You mentioned that on one of your trips from  
14       the airport in Tripoli back to the Annex, I believe you rode  
15       with some of the DOD personnel, is that right?

16          A     Yes.

17          Q     And do you remember their names?

18          A     From the airport to the Annex?

19          Q     Yes.

20          A     When we just went back to receive the people coming  
21       back from Benghazi?

22          Q     Correct.

23          A     No. I do not.

24          Q     Do you remember the names of any DOD personnel that  
25       were in Tripoli during your time there?

1 A Nope.

2 Q Okay.

3 BY MS. JACKSON:

4 Q I want to go back just for a little bit about when  
5 the mortars hit the SCIF building. As you said earlier, you  
6 were on the ladder coming down when it first hit. And then  
7 you went inside, is that correct?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. And the second one, did the first mortar  
10 strike the building?

11 A I didn't know. No, I couldn't tell exactly where  
12 it struck, no, because I ran into that building. So, yeah.

13 Q Did the second one strike the building?

14 A Yes. Well, I was inside and it struck the building  
15 it felt like it --

16 Q You could feel the building shake, move, or  
17 whatever?

18 A Yeah.

19 Q Okay. And how many mortars, how many additional  
20 mortars struck the building?

21 A I would -- it felt like four, four or five.

22 Q All right. Based on your experience as an  
23 explosives expert, can you hear mortars approaching even if  
24 they don't strike the building?

25 A No, I don't -- no. It depends. You just you don't

1 know, I mean, distance. I couldn't, no.

2 Q How difficult is it for -- what kind of training  
3 would you need to be precise in striking with a mortar? Does  
4 it take -- can you just randomly do it or do you have to have  
5 some training?

6 A It takes precision.

7 Q So a novice could not -- would not necessarily have  
8 the capability to have three or four mortar strikes on a  
9 building, the same building?

10 A In my opinion, no.

11 BY MR. DAVIS:

12 Q And when a mortar is launched, can you hear a thump  
13 if you are close enough to it coming out of the tube?

14 A In any mortar I have been around, yes.

15 Q Okay. And when it is traveling through the air,  
16 does it make a noise? Is there a little whistle?

17 A I don't know if that holds true for every mortar.  
18 I have heard it sometimes. I have been mortared in Iraq, and  
19 there were times you don't hear it, times you do.

20 Q Okay. When you were in Germany, outside of the  
21 discussion you had with the FBI, do you recall ever making  
22 any written statement, or other oral statement about what  
23 occurred?

24 A You said when I met with the FBI?

25 Q Outside of that meeting?

1 A Outside.

2 Q When you were in Germany did you make any other  
3 statements?

4 A In Germany?

5 Q Yes.

6 A About the attack?

7 Q Correct.

8 A No. No statements. I spoke to [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED] about the event.

10 But in somewhat limited detail.

11 Q And after you came home from Germany, I guess you  
12 know, since the attack, have you made any other written or  
13 recorded statements about the attack if you can remember?

14 A No.

15 Q You spoke with the ARB?

16 A I spoke with the ARB. No, I spoke about firing a  
17 weapon, so searching for someone in a burning building, and  
18 the hazards of firemen, and how that looked like, you know,  
19 what we would have wanted as far as equipment for searching  
20 in a fire.

21 Q Was that an extensive discussion with the ARB on  
22 that topic?

23 A That wasn't with the ARB. I spoke to --

24 Q Oh.

25 A There was a working group with the Asymmetric

1 Warfare Group and the New York City Fire Department and we  
2 just spoke about fire and searching a fire. That was it.

3 Q [REDACTED]  
4 [REDACTED]

5 A [REDACTED]

6 Q And at what point -- did you ever speak with  
7 anybody within the State Department or DS about your time at  
8 the attack?

9 A You mean on the record, or as far as a statement?

10 Q As far as a statement, yeah, a written report or  
11 statement?

12 A No.

13 Q You spoke with [REDACTED] at some point?

14 A Oh, yes, we went over the timeline on the video,  
15 yes.

16 Q And when do you recall talking to [REDACTED] about this?

17 A Timeframes, I can't exactly give you the dates.

18 Q Was it immediately, or was it shortly after the  
19 attack?

20 A After the attack. Shortly after the attack, and  
21 then maybe a follow-up maybe 4 or 5 months later, or 4 months  
22 later.

23 Q And do you know if that conversation was recorded  
24 in any way?

25 A He took notes, yes. He took notes. He took a



1 statement. Can I take a 5-minute --

2 Ms. Jackson. I think we only have two more questions.

3 Mr. Davis. And then you have --

4 Ms. Sawyer. Yeah, let me finish.

5 BY MS. JACKSON:

6 Q Just in closing, from what we hope in closing from  
7 our side, as you sit here, of the questions that you have  
8 answered today both in the unclassified session and the  
9 classified session, is there any answer that you have given  
10 that you need to change, or modify, or elaborate on in any  
11 way? You have taken several breaks. You might have thought  
12 oh, I should have said X. Is there anything that you would  
13 like to add or subtract from any of the answers that you have  
14 given here today?

15 A No, I mean, I don't want to subtract. I have said  
16 everything truthfully to the best of my recollection. To  
17 add, there is not much, just that the actions taken by all of  
18 the agents on the ground, I'm pretty proud of. I think they  
19 did a great job, you know. There is some criticism that one,  
20 that agents weren't prepared, criticism that they didn't fire  
21 in defense of the Ambassador, and I don't think that was  
22 true. I think there was some really good judgment calls  
23 made. And that the reason that the agents didn't engage was  
24 in defense of the Ambassador.

25 You know, based on the situation, making judgment calls

1 that that probably would have been detrimental to the safety  
2 of everyone on the compound had they engaged with the way it  
3 looked at the time. What we saw, it would have probably  
4 caused an increased reaction, and you know, kind of just, you  
5 know, I think they did a great job.

6 Ms. Jackson. Thank you very much. Agent [REDACTED], we will  
7 go off the record.

8 Ms. Safai. Actually, before we go off the record, can I  
9 add something? Is that a yes or no?

10 Ms. Jackson. Why don't we go off the record, and we  
11 will discuss it.

12 Ms. Safai. I mean, as attorneys --

13 Ms. Sawyer. She is Agent [REDACTED] counsel. She is here  
14 to represent him. I think it is fair to allow her to  
15 actually speak on the record and express what she needs to  
16 express.

17 Ms. Safai. Is there a concern for me expressing, just  
18 making two comments?

19 Ms. Jackson. Well, yes. But go ahead.

20 Ms. Safai. Okay. Well, one was a question, and that is  
21 will we get a chance to review the transcript before it is  
22 finalized?

23 Ms. Jackson. We can discuss that logistical issue off  
24 the record. Yes.

25 Ms. Safai. And the second was, we actually wanted to

1     thank Ranking Member Cummings for coming. The chairman made  
2     a big -- what's the proper word to use -- he stated very  
3     clearly he wanted to hear from the survivors. And so I have  
4     to say it is a bit disheartening that no one from the  
5     majority side came either to meet Mr. [REDACTED] or to ask him any  
6     questions. So I just wanted to put that on the record.

7             Mr. Davis. Off the record.

8             [Discussion off the record.]

9  
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2

BY MS. SAWYER:

3

Q Mr. [REDACTED], you were touching on an issue right

4

before we broke that I actually did want to talk to you a

5

little bit about, and that was some of the decisions, the

6

strategic decisions that were made when Special Mission

7

Compound came under attack. And in the last round of

8

discussion, one of the things you told us was that once you

9

had barricaded in Villa B, you had put in a call to the DSCC,

10

the command center, and you reported the attacks, and you

11

reported that the Ambassador was secure. So at the point at

12

which you barricaded, your understanding was that the

13

Ambassador was secure in Villa C?

14

A Yes.

15

Q And that conversation occurred after you had been

16

outside and seen the seven to ten armed attackers?

17

A Yes.

18

Q And so at the point at which you made the decision

19

not to engage in gunfire, what was your understanding of the

20

Ambassador's whereabouts and his safety?

21

A I understood he was inside the Villa with [REDACTED] and

22

Sean Smith.

23

Q And so if you can, just kind of explain, you did

24

touch on it a little about the tactical decisions and the

25

concern that actually engaging in gunfire would make things

1 worse rather than better.

2 A Yes.

3 Q Was that your sense then at the time?

4 A Yes. Yes, it was. And, again, drawing on previous  
5 experience, the compound is very large, and not knowing  
6 exactly where the attack was coming from, I know that based  
7 off of what I perceived based off of the noise, that it  
8 seemed like there were many people in the compound. And even  
9 though I saw seven to 10, I just rationalized that there were  
10 many more based on what I heard. So for me from that point  
11 being in that compound, such a large compound, at this point  
12 with just two of us, myself and [REDACTED] in the open, for us  
13 to engage, that really put everyone at risk. Because if,  
14 say, I couldn't finish the fight if there were more than  
15 seven, then I become a liability. And then it kind of  
16 escalates after that.

17 So, again, even though hope is in the course of action,  
18 the hope would be that if I don't engage and we can bunker,  
19 that gives us time to wait for maybe the response if it is  
20 within 15 minutes, or it gives them some opportunity, maybe  
21 they wanted to destroy the place and leave. But I knew at  
22 that moment and had I engaged and killed one of them, they  
23 more than likely would not leave until everyone was dead.

24 Q And it is the case that at the Special Mission  
25 Compound, in any event, no American lives were lost as a

1 result of gunfire that evening?

2 A No.

3 Q Now, you mentioned just a moment ago your prior  
4 experience that came up a little earlier as well with regard  
5 to concerns you might have about timing. If anything bad was  
6 going to happen, based on your prior experience, in part, you  
7 said it would probably happen during the nighttime. And we  
8 had talked a little bit about your decision at one point to  
9 move a weapon to your bunk, I guess, your residence. Was  
10 that based at all kind of on prior experience?

11 A I wanted to have it with me so that if something,  
12 if we were alerted quickly, I would be able to just react  
13 with my weapon in tow.

14 Q And you had also mentioned that -- I think this was  
15 in the last round of questioning -- that the Chief of Base  
16 had come to the Special Mission on 9/11, 2012?

17 A Yes.

18 Q And was it your belief that he came specifically to  
19 discuss the surveillance incident that had occurred earlier  
20 in the day?

21 A Yes.

22 Q And you were not yourself personally in that  
23 meeting?

24 A No.

25 Q Did anyone express to you after the meeting, the

1 Ambassador or the RSO or any of your DS colleagues, any  
2 concerns based on the conversation with the chief about  
3 security at the mission?

4 A Based off of that conversation, no. Myself and  
5 [REDACTED] spoke about just the overall compound, and we just  
6 said it's a very large compound. This would be very hard to  
7 defend.

8 Q And did you take specific actions between the two  
9 of you to mitigate those concerns?

10 A Earlier in the TOC, I just know that myself and  
11 [REDACTED] and everyone else, just trying to get an overall  
12 rundown. And we went over the EAP, which is essentially if  
13 we are attacked, the plan is to bunker in place and wait for  
14 the QRF from 17th February and possibly the Annex. That was  
15 the plan, and that was discussed.

16 Q And when you discussed the concerns, did anyone  
17 have a concern or a belief that an attack was imminent?

18 A No. Imminent, no.

19 Q One of the other things that came up was the time  
20 that you were at the Annex, and I just wanted to touch, I  
21 think briefly on one aspect of that. You had indicated that  
22 for most of the night, I think all of the night except for a  
23 very brief period of time you were on one of the roofs, and  
24 that for a portion of the time, one of the GRS agents, I  
25 think you mentioned [REDACTED], that name --

1           A     Yes.

2           Q     -- was with you. Do you recall during, obviously  
3 not during any periods of active engagement, but during any  
4 lulls between that active engagement, having a discussion  
5 with him about security concerns at the mission?

6           A     No. He essentially just asked what happened, and I  
7 told him exactly what I said here, that we were inside the  
8 Villa, the other AISs walked in, and everything broke lose.  
9 There were explosions and possibly some gunfire and just  
10 really how it happened. But I can't recall talking about any  
11 specific security concerns.

12          Q     So you don't recall a conversation about specific  
13 requests that had been made for security that had been  
14 denied?

15          A     No, I can't recall that, no.

16          Q     A little earlier you were asked some questions  
17 about whether you had talked to individuals about --

18               BY MR. KENNY:

19          Q     Agent [REDACTED], I just want to take the opportunity to  
20 reintroduce myself. My name is Peter. I'm with the minority  
21 staff. I just want to thank you again for your patience.  
22 It's been a long day. Hopefully just a few more follow-up  
23 questions here, and we'll be finished with our portion.  
24 During the last hour there was a discussion about viewing  
25 television on the Special Mission Compound. Do you recall



1       that conversation?

2           A     Yes, I do.

3           Q     In the course of that conversation we talked about  
4       TV viewing habits, that there was a TV in the cantina, also a  
5       TV in the Villa C location. Is that correct?

6           A     Yes.

7           Q     You had mentioned that you were watching some  
8       specific programming, and I'm not sure if I was clear exactly  
9       when that took place. I believe, if I recall, you were  
10      watching Jay Leno. There was some discussion about Olympic  
11      swimmers, and the Ambassador was also present. Can you help  
12      us understand when that happened?

13          A     I believe that was after his last meeting, so I  
14      would think it was between 7:00 and 8:00.

15          Q     And this is on the 11th of September?

16          A     It was.

17          Q     Okay. And during the course -- while you were  
18      there with the Ambassador, as well as with the Ambassador,  
19      you mentioned that you believed that this is when one of the  
20      other RSOs had briefed you that there was a protest occurring  
21      at Embassy Cairo. Is that correct?

22          A     He was talking directly to the Ambassador about it.

23          Q     I'm sorry. Who was speaking directly?

24          A     [REDACTED], and he was talking directly to the  
25      Ambassador about it.

1 Q Do you recall the content of that conversation?  
2 Was it just relaying information?

3 A He was relaying information, and I think he was  
4 pretty much said there was no significant update from the  
5 last conversation regarding the issue.

6 Q Was there any follow-on discussion with the  
7 Ambassador about special steps the Special Mission would  
8 take, the Diplomatic Security team would take on the  
9 compound?

10 A Not that I can recall.

11 Q Do you recall if during this period, the Ambassador  
12 received a phone call or perhaps a text message from any  
13 personnel in Tripoli related to the protests?

14 A Not that I recall.

15 Q Did the Ambassador seem surprised when he learned  
16 of the protest at Embassy Cairo, and did he perhaps seem like  
17 he was already aware that it was occurring?

18 A He didn't seem surprised, no. When he spoke to  
19 [REDACTED]?

20 Q Yes.

21 A He didn't seem surprised, no.

22 Q To your knowledge, was Egyptian television  
23 available in Benghazi?

24 A I don't know.

25 Q Okay. I'd just like to point out that the

1 Accountability Review Board, you've had the opportunity to  
2 read the unclassified report. Is that right?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Page 4, and I'd like to quote from just a very  
5 brief portion of this, hopefully without introducing the  
6 entire thing as an exhibit. But there is one sentence here  
7 that reads, "The board concluded that there was no protest  
8 prior to the attacks which were unanticipated in their scale  
9 and intensity." Do you agree with the ARB's finding in this  
10 regard, the finding that they made in December of 2012?

11 A That it was not a protest?

12 Q Yes.

13 A To me it did not appear to be a protest.

14 BY MS. SAWYER:

15 Q And what about the second half of that sentence,  
16 Which were unanticipated in their scale and intensity, with  
17 regard to the attacks. Do you agree with that finding?

18 A I would not have anticipated that, no. I mean, it  
19 was fairly intense. But what I understood then and what I  
20 understand now after viewing the videotape, it was a pretty  
21 significant attack. They said upwards of 90 people, so  
22 that's pretty large in scale. And they came, they had some  
23 weaponry, serious weaponry. So they came pretty armed,  
24 well-armed.

25 Q And do you think it is it fair to say that if you

1 individually had anticipated them, you would have raised  
2 concerns with one of your colleagues or with the Ambassador?

3 A If I had any significant concerns, yes, I felt that  
4 it was open forum. I could you have brought those up to the  
5 Ambassador or to the RSO.

6 BY MR. KENNY:

7 Q Shifting topics now, you described your evacuation  
8 with your diplomatic security colleagues from the Special  
9 Mission Compound to the Annex, and you've described some of  
10 the fire that you had come under during that trip. You  
11 mentioned at one point, and I've written down here that you  
12 passed what you felt was a benign militia?

13 A Uh-huh.

14 Q And that that militia had, in fact, opened fire on  
15 your vehicle as it passed. I was wondering what was your  
16 understanding of who that militia was, and who informed you  
17 that that was what you described as a benign militia?

18 A As we had driven in and driving on the 10th,  
19 driving on to the Special Mission on to that road, the access  
20 road, in passing, I believe, it was [REDACTED] that stated that to  
21 this point they hadn't really bothered anyone. They had kind  
22 of stayed to themselves.

23 Q Okay. And did [REDACTED] indicate to you where he had  
24 heard or received that information from? Did it seem that it  
25 was just based on his personal knowledge of the militia?

1           A     Yes. He had been there a month, I believe.

2           Q     Okay. Just one additional quick question, possibly  
3     two. You mentioned at some point when you and the other  
4     agents and some of the GRS team members were attempting to  
5     recover those who were left in the safe haven in Villa C,  
6     that you had left your weapon in the car and gone back. I  
7     was just trying to understand why you might have done that.  
8     Was that based on at that time that the threat level had  
9     subsided?

10          A     Yeah. So at this point, I understood that we had  
11     some support from 17th February, and I understood that GRS  
12     was on the ground as well. So we put [REDACTED], even though he  
13     was still suffering from smoke inhalation, he still seemed  
14     pretty cognizant of what was going on, so we left the weapons  
15     with him in the vehicle where at least it could be  
16     semi-secure. It was more of a hindrance and a hazard to be  
17     searching with it. At some point, I even came back and took  
18     off my PPE because I was literally drenched in sweat, so that  
19     I could search more effectively, or try to.

20          Q     I know I promised one, but I just have one  
21     additional follow-up. During any time that you were  
22     stationed in Libya, do you recall receiving any information  
23     or reading any threat reporting on militias using mortars,  
24     perhaps against other Libyans, Libyan-on-Libyan violence  
25     using mortars?

1 A No, no specific information, no.

2 Ms. Sawyer. We can go to unclass to finish this. But  
3 did you guys have questions while we're still. We'll just do  
4 it here, right.

5 BY MS. JACKSON:

6 Q I did have one question of clarification. From the  
7 questions that you were just asked, what you were saying was  
8 given the size of the group that came to attack and the  
9 weaponry involved, that it was apparent that it was a  
10 preplanned attack?

11 A Well, based off of what I saw later on, the scope  
12 and intensity, yeah, it looked preplanned to me. At the time  
13 I don't know if it was preplanned.

14 Q Right. When you were on the ground, you had no way  
15 of knowing?

16 A No, I didn't know what it was. It looked like a  
17 protest, but I didn't know what prompted it. It just looked  
18 like a significant attack.

19 Q So not a protest. An attack?

20 A Uh-huh.

21 Q And was that, and you felt that it was an attack  
22 from the moment it started?

23 A Yes. There were explosions and gunfire. That's an  
24 attack.

25 Ms. Jackson. Okay.

1 BY MS. SAWYER:

2 Q And you said that was based on kind of what you had  
3 observed of the video. And do you recall roughly when you  
4 had the opportunity to see that video?

5 A No. It was a few months afterward, yeah.

6 Q And do you have a, you know, any opinion at all  
7 about, in terms of preplanning, what kind of preplanning  
8 would be required or what you observed on the video?

9 A For the attack? Where it was taken, no, I don't.  
10 I don't know how they would have preplanned it. I mean, the  
11 only variables I know is that there was surveillance prior  
12 to, and I don't know if it was associated with the attackers.

13 Ms. Sawyer. Okay. I think we can --

14 Mr. Davis. Are you guys done?

15 Ms. Sawyer. We are just going to go to unclassified but  
16 not move. We will be in a classified setting, but this need  
17 not be classified as top secret.

18 Ms. Jackson. We'll just send it off with the rest of  
19 the paragraphing.

20 Ms. Sawyer. That's fine.

21 BY MS. SAWYER:

22 Q So I'm going to ask you a series of questions,  
23 Mr. [REDACTED]. I'll try to be as quick as possible. There are a  
24 few pages. You've been asked and you've been incredibly  
25 patient with us because you do have firsthand knowledge of

1 facts related to both the night of the attack and kind of the  
2 before and after of the attack. As you can probably  
3 understand, there has been a lot of allegations, a lot of  
4 speculation about what happened. Not everyone who speculates  
5 about it has firsthand knowledge. You do about some of the  
6 facts. I will also ask you questions that you may not have  
7 firsthand knowledge of. So what I just want to explore with  
8 you and what we want to do in the course of this  
9 investigation is make sure that when witnesses appear before  
10 us, we do exhaust the range of allegations that are out there  
11 so that there is no need hopefully to have you come back and  
12 speak to us again and that we have been very thorough in our  
13 investigation. So I would ask that you bear with me. It's  
14 not as short as I would like it to be, but over 2-1/2 years,  
15 the allegation list has grown and grown. So I'll not be so  
16 rapid that the reporter cannot get my words, but I'll try to  
17 get through this.

18 So it has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton  
19 intentionally blocked military action on the night of the  
20 attacks. One Congressman has speculated that "Secretary  
21 Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, and this resulted in  
22 the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in  
23 Benghazi." Mr. [REDACTED], do you have any evidence that Secretary  
24 of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to  
25 "stand down" on the night of the attacks?



1           A     No.

2           Q     Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State  
3 Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense  
4 Panetta on the night of the attacks?

5           A     No.

6           Q     It has also been alleged that Secretary Hillary  
7 Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying  
8 security in Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker  
9 evaluated the claim and gave it, "Four Pinocchios," its  
10 highest award for false claims. Nonetheless, this claim has  
11 persisted over time. So I just wanted to ask, do you have  
12 any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an  
13 April 2012 cable denying security resources in Libya?

14          A     No.

15          Q     Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was  
16 personally involved in providing specific instruction on  
17 day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

18          A     No.

19          Q     It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
20 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed  
21 by General Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner  
22 support for military operations in Libya in spring of 2011.  
23 Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
24 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
25 by General Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner

1 support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

2 A No.

3 Q Moving to another allegation, it has been alleged  
4 that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring  
5 weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan  
6 report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on  
7 Intelligence found that "The CIA was not collecting and  
8 shipping arms from Libya to Syria" and that they found, "no  
9 support for this allegation." Do you have any evidence to  
10 contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan  
11 report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya  
12 to Syria?

13 A No.

14 Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities  
15 in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfer  
16 from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

17 A No.

18 Q Now, turning to the night of the attacks where you  
19 were present, a team of CIA security personnel was  
20 temporarily delayed from departing the Annex to assist the  
21 Special Mission Compound, and there have been a number of  
22 allegations about the cause of that or the appropriateness of  
23 that delay. The House Intelligence Committee issued a  
24 bipartisan report concluding that the team was not ordered to  
25 "stand down," but that instead there were tactical

1 discussions and disagreements on the ground over how quickly  
2 to depart. Do you have any evidence that would contradict  
3 the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no  
4 standdown order to CIA personnel?

5 A No.

6 Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the  
7 decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right  
8 decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or  
9 improper reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA's  
10 security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the  
11 Special Mission Compound?

12 A No.

13 Q One concern that has been raised by an individual  
14 regarding the Accountability Review Board process is that in  
15 the course of producing documents to that ARB, damaging  
16 documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of the  
17 production of documents to the ARB. Do you have any evidence  
18 that anyone in the State Department removed or scrubbed  
19 damaging documents from the materials that were provided to  
20 the ARB?

21 A No.

22 Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
23 Department directed anyone else at the State Department to  
24 remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that  
25 were provided to the ARB?

1           A     No.

2           Q     And let me ask this question also for documents  
3     that have been produced to Congress over the course of the  
4     several investigations. Do you have any evidence that anyone  
5     at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging  
6     documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

7           A     No.

8           Q     Okay. Just a couple questions about talking points  
9     after the attacks. It has been alleged that CIA Deputy  
10    Director Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points  
11    about the Benghazi attacks for political reasons that he then  
12    misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA  
13    "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the  
14    highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship." Do  
15    you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell  
16    gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress  
17    about the Benghazi talking points?

18          A     No.

19          Q     Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director  
20    Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for  
21    political reasons?

22          A     No.

23          Q     It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made  
24    an "intentional misrepresentation" when she spoke on the  
25    Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks. Do you have

1 any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally  
2 misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday  
3 talk shows?

4 A No.

5 Q It has also been alleged that the President of the  
6 United States was, "virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief," on  
7 the night of the attacks and that he was "missing in action."  
8 Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that the  
9 President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or missing  
10 in action on the night of the attacks?

11 A No.

12 Q It has been alleged that a team of four military  
13 personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were  
14 considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi, were  
15 ordered by their superiors to "stand down," meaning, to cease  
16 all operations. Military officials have stated that those  
17 four individuals were instead ordered to "remain in place in  
18 Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their  
19 current location." A Republican staff report issued by the  
20 House Armed Services Committee found that "there was no  
21 standdown order issued to U.S. military personnel at Tripoli  
22 who sought to join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any  
23 evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed  
24 Services Committee that "there was no standdown order issued  
25 to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the

1 fight in Benghazi"?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. And then finally, it has been alleged that  
4 the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the  
5 attacks that would have saved lives. Former Republican  
6 Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chair of the  
7 House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the  
8 attacks after which he stated "Given where the troops were,  
9 how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it  
10 dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did."  
11 Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's  
12 conclusion?

13 A No.

14 Q Do you have evidence that the Pentagon had military  
15 assets available to them on the night of the attacks that  
16 could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership  
17 intentionally decided not to deploy?

18 A No.

19 Ms. Sawyer. I think with that we will go off the  
20 record.

21 [Whereupon, at 5:54 p.m., the interview was concluded.]  
22  
23  
24  
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**INTERVIEW OF  
DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #15**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MAY 12, 2015

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

DANA CHIPMAN, *Chief Counsel*

SHARON JACKSON, *Deputy Chief Counsel*

SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*

MARK GRIDER, *Deputy General Counsel*

KIM BETZ, *Member Outreach Liaison and Counsel*

HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*

BRENT WOOLFORK, *Minority Senior Professional Staff*

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*



Ms. Jackson. Let's go on the record.

This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED], conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks of the U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and matters related to it pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Agent [REDACTED], could you state your full name for the record, please.

Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

Ms. Jackson. Okay. On behalf of the committee, we appreciate your willingness to come in and talk to us today. It's my understanding that you came in from overseas.

What time does your body tell you that it is?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Right now it's 9 1/2 hours ahead. So I think we're pushing almost dinnertime.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. All right. Well, we'll try and get you out before your body says it's your bedtime. Okay?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you.

Ms. Jackson. Again, I introduced myself earlier. But I am Sharon Jackson. I am one of the counsel on the majority staff.

And we're going to go around and have everyone introduce themselves so you at least, at one point, have a name that goes with a face. There will be no quiz at the end where you have to put names and faces together at the end.

But I'll start with my colleague to my right.

Ms. Clarke. Sheria Clarke.

Ms. Robinson. Kendal Robinson, detailee for minority staff.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority staff.

Mr. Woolfork. Brent Woolfork with the majority staff.

Mr. Chipman. I'm Dana Chipman with the majority staff.

Mr. Grider. Mark Grider with majority staff.

Ms. Betz. Kim Betz with the majority staff.

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Mr. Evers. And I'm Austin Evers from the State Department.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Before we begin, I'd like to set out the ground rules that we're going to follow today. As in anything, as you're well aware, there are procedures and processes that are going to be followed.

The way that questioning occurs before a congressional committee is that a member from the majority, either a member of the committee, a Member of Congress on the majority staff or a member from the majority staff, will ask questions for up to 1 hour.

And then we over here will switch seats. You'll stay there. And then we'll turn it over to the minority staff for them to have a similar period, an hour, to ask questions for that time period. We will adhere to that 1-hour time period for each side. And, again, questions can only be asked by a Member of Congress who is on the committee or a member of the staff. And we'll rotate back and forth until each side has exhausted all of the questions that they have for you.

During your career as a law enforcement officer, you may have had to testify in a deposition or in a Federal court or even a state court. And this is a little different. We are not bound by the Rules of Evidence here. So we may ask your opinion on things. We may ask hearsay. And all of that is admissible in a transcribed interview before a congressional committee.

You or the counsel that you have brought with you today may raise an objection to a question, but only for one of privilege. That invocation of privilege is subject to review by the chairman of the committee, and he will then decide whether the question will be answered or not. Because, again, privilege, as like other things, do not necessarily exist in a committee.

So the minority staff and our staff are not permitted to raise objections to questions. So it's just you, your counsel, and the only one that will be entertained will be one for privilege.

This session is going to be -- we are in an unclassified setting. So if you believe a question that is posed to you calls for a classified answer, just say so, and we will either retract the question or reserve it until we go into a classified setting.

In preparing for yours, I don't believe that any of my questions will go into classified information based on the documents that I have reviewed and things like that. But, again, if you feel that it does, we will ask that you answer as best you can in an unclassified manner, but let us know that more details could be given in a classified setting, if you can.

Mr. [REDACTED]. [Nonverbal response.]

Ms. Jackson. You are welcome to confer with Mr. Evers at any time that you need. We understand he is here as the State Department's attorney, not as your personal attorney.

But he is here today for you. And so, should you wish to confer with him before giving an answer or about any procedural thing, we will give you that opportunity to do so.

So just let us know. We'll go off the record. You can step out. And we'll give you the time that you need to confer with him.

We will also take a break whenever it's convenient for you. Typically, we've taken a break at the end of the first hour, but while we switch seats for the minority to come in.

But if you need a break before then or at any time during this session, again, just let us know. We'll go off the record. We'll take a break. Usually, after the first 2 hours, we'll take maybe a 45-minute break for lunch and reconvene, if we need to, for another round.

We have waters out. We have coffee available, tea available. So if you need anything, again, just let us know. We're going to try and make you as comfortable as possible to get through this.

As you can see, we have an official reporter here taking down everything that is said so that we have a written record of this interview. So it will be important that you give all responses verbally. A lot of people nod and shake their head, but that's very difficult for the reporter to take down. So just like a court of law,

responses have to be out loud.

The other thing that's often difficult to do is to wait to begin your answer until the question is done and for me to wait until your answer is done until I ask the next question maybe in followup. We need to be cognizant that it's difficult for the reporter to take down when two people are talking at the same time and just dial it back a little bit, take a little bit slower pace.

As for the questions that we ask you today, it is important to us that you understand what we're trying to get at in a particular question. So if you miss part of it or you're unsure as to what we're asking, please ask us to restate it or rephrase it in some way. Sometimes it may be a compound question. We can break it down.

But we want to make sure that you understand the questions that we're asking to give us the best answer that you can in that. So please don't hesitate, if you're confused about anything, to just ask us to rephrase or restate it.

We also want a clear understanding of what you know from your time in Benghazi, Libya. So we're going to ask you to give us your best recollection. We understand that several years have passed since you were there, you've done a few things in the interim, and everything is not going to be crystal clear.

But we are going to ask you to give us your best recollection possible so that we can gather -- I mean, we weren't there. You were there. And so we need you to tell us about what was happening in Benghazi at the time you were there.

If you just don't remember a particular event, please tell us. We understand it's human nature that memories fade over time. But to the extent that you can give us something or give us information about someone else who was there, someone else who might have information on that point, let us know who that person might be so that we may be able to explore that avenue.

Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay.

Ms. Jackson. Do you understand that you have an obligation to answer questions from Congress truthfully?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. And do you understand that that also applies to this committee?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. As a Federal law enforcement agent, I'm sure you're aware, but I need to ask you: Do you know that a witness who provides false testimony could be subject to a prosecution for perjury or making a false statement?

Mr. [REDACTED]. 1001. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Yes. Okay.

Is there any reason, as you sit here today, that you would not be able to answer the questions truthfully that are going to be posed to you?

Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. That's the end of the process for me.

Does the minority have anything that they would like to add?

Ms. Sawyer. We don't.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. I would show that the clock reads now about 10:12, 12 after 10:00. So we're going to begin with the first hour of questioning.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Agent [REDACTED], how long have you been a Federal law enforcement agent with the Department of State?

A I've been with the Bureau of Diplomatic Security since [REDACTED] 2001.

Q And did you have any prior military law enforcement or State Department experience prior to becoming a Diplomatic Security agent?

A Yes. I was in the Army Reserves as a 96 Bravo, which is an intelligence analyst. And I also served for the [REDACTED] District Attorney's Office as an intelligence analyst in [REDACTED] prior to becoming an agent.

Q Was that criminal intelligence?

A The military obviously was --

Q Right.

A But the [REDACTED] DA's Office was criminal in nature.

Q Okay. And when did you do that?

A That was in 1998 until I was actually hired by DS.

Q Okay. And starting in [REDACTED] 2001 until present, can you give us a summary of your various assignments within Diplomatic Security.

A Okay. Well, I became an agent, like I said, in 2001. I graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in the [REDACTED] 2002. I was assigned to the [REDACTED] field office.

After [REDACTED], I served as the assistant regional security officer in [REDACTED]. From [REDACTED], I became the RSO in [REDACTED] for 1 year. After [REDACTED], I served in [REDACTED] as an assistant regional security office.

After [REDACTED], I served as the RSO in [REDACTED]. From [REDACTED], I went back to FLETC, as I mentioned earlier, Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. I was the agency rep for FLETC for 3 years.

And currently I serve as the regional security officer in [REDACTED], which is in the northern provinces.

Q And how long have you been in [REDACTED]?

A July 23, 2014. I know the date well.

Q And how long will you be there?

A July 23, 2015.

Q Okay. In early 2012, you went to Benghazi, Libya. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And when were you in Benghazi?

A I was there from first week of January -- exact date I cannot recall -- till about February -- I think it was just before Valentine's Day, 13th or 14th.

Q And how is it -- and that was considered a temporary duty assignment?



A Correct. In our vernacular, TDY.

Q Right. Those letters, capital T, capital D, capital Y?

A Correct.

Q Yes.

And how is it that you either volunteered or got recruited for the Benghazi assignment?

A It's typical in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to put out an email to the agents requesting volunteers to serve in certain areas of the world. Benghazi just happened to be one of them. And, therefore, I put my name -- submitted my name.

Q Okay. Were you at FLETC at the time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Had you done any other TDYs in your career prior to Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Can you summarize those for us.

A Yes. I have served six TDYs in Afghanistan, four TDYs in Iraq. I've also been TDY as RSO in Sana'a, Yemen.

Q You seem to like to go to the hot spots around the world. Do you choose in a way to have the challenge of a high-threat post?

A In order to respond to that, I would just say, when duty calls, I'm more of one of volunteering to go to those areas.

Q Okay. Did you have high-threat tactical training prior to any of your TDYs in a high-threat post?

A Yes.

Q When did you undertake that high-threat tactical course?

A The high-threat course has been in place -- I want to say it was put together in 2002, but actually implemented in 2003. I was one of the first class that actually went through the course.

I have taken that course twice. Recently I took a high-threat executive course, which is more for a manager or higher level. So, as far as high threat goes, I've taken that course three times in different versions.

Q Was the executive course taken after your tour of duty in Benghazi, Libya?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And had you taken the high-threat course twice before going to Benghazi, Libya?

A Yes.

Q Okay. You took it for the first time in 2003. Is that correct?

A I believe so.

Q Okay. And then when did you take it again?

A It was just -- I would say it was 2004 or 2005. It might be the wintertime. As I stated earlier, I was RSO [REDACTED], and that began in the fall of 2005.

Q So sometime before you went to [REDACTED]?

A Definitely. Yes.

Q Okay. Had the course changed or evolved over time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And how so?

A Well, the course was a 12-week course, if I recall the first one. And by the time I took the second one, I think it was down to 10 weeks.

A lot of that has to do with having enough training calendar days in order to get through all the training, and I also believe it has something to do with lessons learned of what was important and what may not have been important in some of the training. It was an evolution.

Q Uh-huh.

Now, you said that your assignment at FLETC for 3 years was to be the agency representative to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q What does that actually entail? Are you an instructor? Do you put together courses? Do you advise others on what the State Department needs? All of the above?

A As the DS representative at FLETC, I'm in charge of three agents and one PSC, or contractor. And our job there is to implement the DS agents into that curriculum, which is, at FLETC, a basic agent course. It's a requirement within Diplomatic Security to have that course in order to then go on to follow-on training in becoming an agent.

My job is to represent Diplomatic Security to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center executives, lobby, perhaps, on behalf of them, depending on training that we require for our agents, as well

as be the representative to the students actually in the training whenever there are disciplinary or other things that happen at FLETC.

Also, as the DS representative, I'm mentoring the agents who are actually instructors that actually participate in the class, and I took it upon myself to actually become an instructor if I had chosen to actually take classes as well.

And the reason behind that is I didn't want to manage people with something I didn't already know how they should be actually implementing the policy of FLETC. So I took it upon myself to take that training as well.

Q So there's actual training to become an instructor?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And have you actually taught any courses?

A I have not taught any FLETC courses, but I've taught Diplomatic Security courses.

Q Okay. And what were some of the courses that you've taught?

A Over the recent scare of shutdown for DHS, when I was back at FLETC, there was a shutdown where we had to actually take our students off of their property.

So I took it upon myself to instruct our agents how to do route analysis with motorcades, how to do advances. And then the other courses were basically physical activities, push-ups, sit-ups, running, things like that.

Q Okay. Are there special requirements when you undertake motorcades or movements in high-threat areas versus other more stable

areas?

A This question is separate from FLETC or are you talking about just DS?

Q Just DS.

A In regards to motorcade operations in a high-threat environment for diplomatic security, there are different procedures as opposed to what you would do CONUS or secure stateside.

Q And what are some of those differences?

A Those differences would include the type of vehicles, perhaps, the type of special equipment that we have in the vehicles, and may include different tactics in how you drive, depending on the environment.

Q Would it also include the number of vehicles, the number of agents, who were along?

A I want to say no.

Q Okay. All right. Going back to your tour of duty in Benghazi, Libya -- and I believe you said you were there from early January through just about the middle of February. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Who were the State Department foreign service officers in Benghazi when you were there?

A When I arrived, I believe the name is [REDACTED], who was the IMO/management officer and collateral duties. And the principal officer at the time was [REDACTED] or [REDACTED].

Q And did those two individuals remain constant during the

entire time that you were there or did one or both of those individuals rotate out?

A Both of those individuals rotated out.

Q Okay. And was that shortly after you arrived, in the middle of your tour, or at the end of your tour, if you recall?

A I recall it was near the end of the tour.

Q Okay. And who were they replaced by?

A Mr. [REDACTED], who did IMO. I do not recall the gentleman's name. If you had a photo, maybe I could say that's him.

And the other gentleman was -- I believe it was [REDACTED]. I do recall the gentleman that replaced Mr. [REDACTED] came from The Hague -- or at least that's what I can remember off the top of my head.

Q Was his first name perhaps [REDACTED]?

A The IMO person?

Q Yes.

A That sounds familiar.

Q Like [REDACTED] or something like that?

A It may.

Q Okay.

A I think that may be it.

Q All right. Were there other employees in Benghazi -- other State Department employees in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was there an individual known to you as [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

A The name [REDACTED] is familiar. I'm familiar with the name.

Q Okay. [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

But for this question, Mr. [REDACTED] was an advisor/consultant to the public -- the PO.

Q And that means "principal officer"?

A Correct.

Q Okay. And that would have been Mr. [REDACTED], who was then replaced by Mr. [REDACTED]?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was Mr. [REDACTED] like a full-time employee in Benghazi? I mean, did he show up every morning, stay all day, go home at the end of the day, or was it more of an ad hoc arrangement, from your perspective?

A I'd rather leave that to the classified setting.

Q Okay. It's your assertion that that information would be classified?

Mr. Evers. I don't think that's what he's saying. We spoke about this off the record prior to the beginning of the interview.

Ms. Jackson. Uh-huh.

Mr. Evers. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Mr. Evers. -- so we can address it.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Other than Mr. [REDACTED], were there other persons?

A There was what I would call a local hire or a locally engaged staff -- the acronym LES -- female. And I cannot give you what her first name is.

Q And what was her role?

A She was more secretarial. She did some secretarial work primarily for the principal officer.

Q Okay. But this person was a Libyan national?

A Yes.

Q Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi, how many other DS agents were there?

A There were two DS agents in Benghazi upon my arrival.

Q Okay. And who were they?

A [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Q Okay. Were there any other DS personnel in Benghazi when



you arrived?

A I just remember those two.

Q Okay. Now, you've described that you went through high-threat tactical training prior to going to Benghazi.

Was that a requirement for anyone who went to Benghazi?

A I don't recall if there was a requirement or not. You know, verbatim, I don't remember what the email said as far as for volunteers and whether there were stipulations. But, as I stated earlier, I was high-threat-qualified.

Q To your knowledge, were the other two agents high-threat-trained?

A I don't know. I don't recall.

Q All right. And did the other two agents remain in Benghazi during the entire time that you were there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So Agent [REDACTED] and Agent [REDACTED] were in Benghazi through the first part of February?

A I believe Mr. [REDACTED] left maybe a week before myself and Mr. [REDACTED]. So I believe Mr. [REDACTED] did a 30-day. We were all going to do 30-day TDYs, and myself and Mr. [REDACTED] decided that we would stay longer because of the turnover with the new agents coming in.

Q Okay. During the first 30 days that you were there -- so, essentially, the month of January -- were the three of you joined by or augmented by any other agents?

A No.

Q So during the time there, it was -- during the month of January, it was just the three of you?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were there any other [REDACTED] present in Benghazi, Libya, outside of the three of you? And I'm just looking for a yes or no answer.

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were they physically present on the compound where you and the other agents were staying?

A No.

Q Were they close by?

Mr. Evers. If you can say in that context.

Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm just going to refrain from answering that question.

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Mr. Evers. And to be clear, you mean in this setting?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Correct. I'm sorry. Yeah.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did you have any Department of Defense support?

A No.

Q Okay. Did you have any support from any other western countries or other entities that had a presence in Benghazi, Libya, such as the U.N. or European countries, other countries that were friendly to the United States?

A We had relationships with the Brits that were in Benghazi,

but there was no direct support of either's mission. But we did communicate with one another.

Q Okay. So there were no formal memorandums of agreement or understanding regarding mutual support for security purposes?

A Correct.

Q Okay. You've described previously that you underwent the high-threat tactical course. It is our understanding that there is something called FACT training within the State Department.

Do you know what I'm talking about when I say FACT training?

A Yes.

Q And does "FACT" stand for "Foreign Affairs Counterterrorism Training"?

A I believe so.

Q Okay. And could you describe just generally what that would be. What is FACT training, to your understanding?

A I've never instructed the course. I've participated in it. And, in summary, FACT training is just a portion of training that the Department of State Diplomatic Security provides to personnel who are going overseas.

They may or may not be Department of State employees. They could be DHS. They could be DOJ. And it's a training course to bring to light their surroundings of what they may experience in whatever country they're going to.

Q Sort of put them on a heightened state of alert when they're going into a high-threat country?

A The FACT training does have the input for people attending it. It talks about surveillance. It gives them a crash-bang course with vehicles to feel what it's like to drive a vehicle and push out. So yes.

Q Okay. What's a crash-bang course?

A It's a -- it's where you actually move a vehicle with another vehicle and they help you with tactics on how to do that in case you're ever cornered.

Q Okay. To your knowledge, was there a requirement that the foreign service officers who were serving in Benghazi -- was there a requirement that they undergo FACT training prior to going there?

A I do not know.

Q Okay. Was there any specific equipment or other type of training that you had to undergo prior to going to Benghazi? Were you required for any language training or any other type of security training or were you provided any special equipment prior to going to Benghazi?

A I can only speak for myself. I wasn't asked to do any other additional training or given any other equipment prior to taking on this mission.

Q Were you given a list of things that you should take with you?

A I recall there was a list. It was more geared toward, you know, "The weather is going to be cold. Make sure you have long johns" or that kind of thing, but nothing specific in regards to just security.

Q No.

Do you recall? Did you take, like, your own body armor and other things like that?

A I did not.

Q You did not.

Was that available for you once you got there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was there a sufficient amount of personal protection equipment available in Benghazi when you got there?

A There was sufficient amount of protective equipment for the personnel on the ground in Benghazi.

Q Okay. Was there a sufficient number of weapons for the personnel who were on the ground in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q It appeared you might have hesitated a little bit.

Is there anything -- did you -- would you have preferred to have more or different weaponry in Benghazi?

A No. I had what was -- what I needed in order to do my job.

Q And what was that?

A I had a pistol. I had rifles. I had ammunition, smoke, vehicles -- armored vehicles.

Q Is there something called an [REDACTED] or an [REDACTED]?

A Yes.

Q Okay. What is that?

A For Diplomatic Security, that's a machine gun -- a heavy

machine gun.

Q Okay. Had you been trained on one of those?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And when had you received that training?

A During high-threat training.

Q Okay. So anyone who was high-threat-trained would have been trained on that?

A Anyone who -- any DS agent who was in my class for high threat would have received that training.

Q Okay. Do you know if that training had been dropped in subsequent years?

A I don't know.

Q Okay. Was there any machine guns available in Benghazi to you or the other agents?

A Yes.

Q Okay. On your compound?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Prior to going to Benghazi, were you given any intelligence reports or briefing papers regarding the security situation in Benghazi?

A I was put on an email distro prior to my arrival in order to try to ascertain what I would be going into. Granted, it was during the holidays. So a lot of people took time off. But I was definitely put on the distro regarding information regarding Benghazi.

Q Okay. And you were going in to be, essentially, the agent

in charge or the lead supervisory agent in Benghazi. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Who were you replacing?

A My understanding, that I was replacing -- actually, I don't remember the gentleman's name who I would be replacing.

[Bell ringing.]

Mr. [REDACTED]. Time's up.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q That is wishful thinking on your part. The buzzers and the bells that you hear mean something. I have no idea what. But they signal Members of Congress that they are either to be someplace or not to be someplace.

But it certainly, we assure you, does not mean we have to evacuate the building for any reason, and it, unfortunately for you, does not mean that time is up.

A That's okay. No problem.

If you don't mind restating the question just because it threw me off.

Q Yes. And we have gotten used to them. So yes.

I believe I asked who you replaced. Who was the supervisor --

A Okay.

Q -- before you?

A I don't recall the gentleman's name who was in charge at Benghazi. But the last person there that I recall prior to Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED] arrival was a gentleman by the name of [REDACTED]

██████. I don't know if he was in charge or he was just another agent that was there when they made the transition.

Q Okay. Did you have conversations either over the telephone or by email with him prior to your arrival in Benghazi?

A As I stated earlier, I was put on a distro, and I may have had some interaction with him. I just don't remember.

Q Okay. Outside of emails on that distribution list, do you recall getting anything specifically from him?

A I don't recall specifically, but I'm sure there was probably a correspondence between us.

Q Okay. Any other agents who either were in Benghazi at the time or had been in Benghazi before? Did you sort of reach out for any sort of informal intel about what it was like over there with anyone that you knew had already been there?

A I cannot give a definitive answer because it's been so long. And I'm still in contact with these people. So I couldn't say yes or no because I still have a relationship with them and I speak with them often. So I don't remember if it was prior to Benghazi, while I was in Dubai, or just prior arriving in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And who are some of those people that you've communicated with regarding your experience in Benghazi?

A I know of one person that I -- that I believe served in Benghazi prior to my arrival. His name is ██████████.

Q Okay. Let me just take a step back.

Did you ever do a TDY in Tripoli?



A No.

Q Okay. Did you consider it?

A I would have considered -- knowing me, that if they offered, I probably would have done it.

Q Okay. Prior to going to Benghazi, had you read any intelligence reports either authored by the State Department or any other government agency?

A I don't remember reading any intelligence reports.

Q Okay. Once you were there, did you have access to intelligence reports?

A On the ground in Benghazi?

Q Yes.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did you read them?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And were those daily reports? Weekly reports? Bimonthly reports?

A I remember going through a daily report that we call a situational report, also known as a SITREP. I remember reading something like that. But there were other intelligence reports there.

Q Okay. Was the SITREP something that you or the other agents prepared and sent to Diplomatic Security headquarters?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what kind of information would you include in those reports?

A     Situational reports are, like we were just discussing, put out daily. They're not all-encompassing of what happens the 24 hours prior. But what it does do is provide some insight to what we've done for that period.

It may include movements, any incidences that may have occurred during that timeframe, and possibly a status report on security upgrades.

Q     Okay. And did you personally prepare those reports or did you delegate that to one of the other agents while you were there?

A     It was a collaborative effort. But I, for the most part, delegated it to one of the ARSOs -- Mr. [REDACTED] or Mr. [REDACTED] -- to actually draft it. We would discuss it to ensure its accuracy at least for that time period and then we'd submit it.

Q     Okay. And then, as you said, you did these daily?

A     We tried to. DS likes to be informed of what's going on. Depending on the circumstance of that day, whether we were out for long movements, we tried to get one out every day. And, if not, we got one out that following morning.

Q     Okay. And to whom were these reports directed? I mean, was there a regular list of people or did you just send it to one place and then that place forwarded it to the relevant persons?

A     From what I recall, our situational reports were passed through [REDACTED], who was at DS headquarters at the desk -- or what we call "the desk."

If there were other people on that distro, I just don't remember.

But I remember vividly that we would go through him. I did a lot of communication with him.

Q He was sort of your lifeline --

A Yes.

Q -- in a manner of speaking?

And he was -- was he the Libya desk officer?

A I don't know if he was the Libya -- I don't know.

Q Okay. He certainly had Benghazi. He certainly had the Benghazi Mission in his portfolio, as they would say?

A Yes.

Q Do you know if he had other countries or other places?

A I do not recall.

Q Okay. Okay. Going back to these SITREPs that were sent in and you said that you delegated the responsibility for drafting them to the other agents who were there, would you personally review them before they got sent off or did the other agents -- were they authorized to just send them off without your review?

A The other agents had the authorization to send in SITREPs. I made it a point to instruct them that, if they were going to do one, to make sure they discuss it with me so -- although I didn't have to read it just before they sent it. As long as we had some kind of discussion prior to being sent, they had the authority to do that.

Q Okay. All right. So you and the other two agents were in charge of the security at the compound. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And you had a principal officer and an IMO management officer that you supported. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And there were these other two individuals that we talked about. But for movements in and around Benghazi, did you provide security for all four of those individuals or just the principal officer and the management officer?

A It was my job to provide security for the PO and the IMO if they were outside of the compound.

Q Okay. And the other -- I'm assuming the locally employed staff, she was sort of -- she did not live on compound, did she?

A No.

Q Okay. So she came and went every day?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And you were not responsible for providing security for her. Is that correct?

A Correct.

Q The other individual we talked about, he came and went from the compound on his own volition?

A I had no responsibility for that individual's comings and goings.

Q Okay. Describe for us, if you will, how you and the other agents would undertake a movement with the principal officer.

A I requested that the principal officer give us at least 24 hours' heads-up when they wanted to move so that we can plan for the

movement.

Depending on where he wanted to go, if it was within the city, then I'd be able to put something together, advise the agents, and try to get some intelligence about the location that we'd be going to.

We would put in a two-car motorcade and put the principal officer in the vehicle with myself and another agent and go to a venue.

Q Okay. Who would be in the second vehicle?

A Depending on what was going on, we would have the other agent in the other vehicle. And, if not, a local national might be driving it, carrying perhaps the Secretary or somebody else that the PO maybe wanted to go along with. But that's how -- that's how we did it.

Q Okay. Was there a requirement that one agent remain back at the compound?

A There was a requirement to ensure that anybody under Chief of Mission had security. So there were times when the principal officer wanted to go somewhere and I needed all the agents and I had the IMO come with us.

Q So that you had everyone together?

A We had a complete package.

Q Okay. And who was left behind to guard the compound when all of the agents had to --

A Well, we had our local security guards that we hired, as well as the 17th Feb militia, which I would consider like a quick reaction force.

Q QRF?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. Whereas the other ones were your local guard force, or LGF?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was the LGF armed?

A No.

Q Okay. Was the QRF armed?

A Yes. Yes.

Q Yes.

Okay. What type of communication systems did you have in Benghazi?

A We had a landline. We had radios. And we also had satellite phones.

Q Okay. Did you have computer systems?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what kind of computer systems did you have?

A We had unclass and, I believe, classified laptops.

Q Okay. Did you have any issues with your radios working satisfactorily in the Benghazi area?

A I don't recall having any issues with my comms --

Q Okay.

A -- regarding radios.

Q Okay. Any other type of communication problems in Benghazi?

A I think we had problems with -- I think we had problems with

Internet, and that might have to do with the power source within Benghazi or something like that. But nothing that really sticks out.

Q We've seen an email address of [REDACTED]. Do you recall that email address?

A I don't.

Q Okay. It's not something that you recall creating?

A I definitely -- I don't believe I created any email addresses.

Q Okay.

A But it doesn't ring a bell.

Q Okay. Would you describe for us the physical layout of the compound that you were at in Benghazi, Libya.

A That is a big question. So I'm going to do my best to answer fully.

Upon my arrival in Benghazi, there were three separate villas or compounds that were connected by bricks in walls where we actually broke down the walls where we could either pass a vehicle or persons through. Each compound was fairly big, even in domestic here, United States sizes for a home, very elaborate and large.

All of them had perimeter fencing of sort. As I stated earlier, only because they were all side by side did we break down the walls in the middle so that we could actually travel from one to the other freely.

I know we called them Villa A, B and C, but I can't recall which one was which. So in my head, I'm going from left to right. It was

a very large villa, very elaborate, that, by the time when I was leaving Benghazi, the decision had been made to actually give it back to the owner, that we didn't need it.

Q Was that Villa A?

A I -- I don't remember.

Q Okay. Was it at one end or was it --

A Yes.

Q Okay.

A It was at one end.

Q Okay.

A Then the middle compound had multiple buildings, for lack of a better term, one where we had our RSO TOC, and the other one was a cafeteria area that we used.

And then the last villa, which we used for the principal officer, another very large compound that had, also, two other -- had two buildings, one, the villa in which myself and the other agents and the principal officer and the IMO lived in, as well as a villa that the 17th Feb -- or QRF resided in.

Q Was that a smaller structure in the corner of the property where the QRF resided?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Sort of like a guest house or something for the property?

A It was a nice guest house, if I had it here in the U.S.

Q And just to be clear, the middle villa that you said had



several buildings, could you go through those again. Because I'm not sure if there were two or three buildings on that property or more.

A The best of my knowledge -- I'm trying to scribble here on my paper so I can have a frame of reference -- we had one building that, as I stated earlier, was the TOC --

Q Okay. And that's --

A -- for the RSO.

Q Tactical operation center?

A Yes.

Q All right. And is that where you kept communications equipment, such as your computers, your satellite phones, radios, and things like that?

A Yes.

Mr. Evers. If you'll just flip the page in the event you want to share the drawing.

Ms. Jackson. Yes.

Mr. [REDACTED]. Oh. I understand.

So we had the RSO office. There were other offices within that building to include the PO's office. So that's one building. It also -- it also had a restroom in there.

And then the building across from it, as I stated earlier, was what I considered a cafeteria, but it was actually a home that we used as a cafeteria. And that --

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did it have bedrooms in it, when you say you considered it

a home, but you used it as a cafeteria?

A It did have -- it had bedrooms in there --

Q Okay.

A -- as well as a chow hall open area where we ate.

And then I don't recall any other large structures in that middle compound. I recall the access control areas, gates where we put vehicles. But that's what I remember.

Q Okay. And at the time that you were there, all of you resided in one villa. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And it was one -- the villa that you retained, that was on the other end of the property, not the middle villa?

A Correct.

Q Okay. And why was it? Was there any security implications of all residing in one villa?

A Yes. I wanted -- I wanted to ensure that, if there was an emergency, that all Chief of Mission personnel would be in one place where we could either harden up -- that's a term that we use -- to -- basically, if we were being attacked, we could all be together and not be sporadically placed throughout the three very large compounds that we were responsible for.

And it also allowed us -- if need be, instead of taking a defensive position, would be to actually become offensive and break out of that building to get to vehicles or whatever we needed, you know, depending on the emergency.

Q Uh-huh.

And did you keep vehicles close to that villa where you were residing in the evening hours?

A In the early part of our -- of my time in Benghazi, I was reviewing what we call REACT procedures. And it was -- it was a test of where should we put the vehicles. But by the time we left, we had drills that involved putting the vehicles next to or close to the building.

Q Okay. And what's a REACT procedure? And that's R-E-A-C-T. Correct?

A Yeah. REACT -- I don't know each acronym. But it was more of a "this is how we respond during a crisis," whether it was an attack on the compound, natural disaster, where do we go if the duck-and-cover or an alarm goes off. And so we -- we -- we practice that.

Q Okay. Now, you said that, when you arrived, they were giving up one of the villas, the largest of the villas, I believe you've described it. Is that correct?

A When I arrived, we had all three active compounds and were using all three of them. By the time I left, the decision was made by the principal officer, in conjunction with RSO and the IMOs, that that villa was just -- it wasn't worth the cost and we didn't need it.

When I left Benghazi, I believe that the lease or something was already taken care of from a contractual standpoint, which is not my purview, but it was still there.

Q So you were still in the process of moving equipment and

other things out of it into the others or had that been completed?

A I can only speak of RSO stuff. Regarding security stuff, I had no -- I had nothing in that -- that last building that I needed to conduct my job.

Q Were there any cameras or barriers or other things like that in that building that needed to be moved over to the remaining villas?

A There was lighting and some of those things that the management officer actually took under their purview to take care of because I was dealing with daily security activities. So I left it to that person.

Q Okay. But that was being done?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Of the two remaining villas that was going to be the compound, were there -- did those two villas meet the security requirements of the State Department?

Tell you what. Let me back up and ask this question.

Are there physical security requirements for overseas posts in the State Department?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And was it your understanding that the Benghazi compound had to meet those requirements?

A No and then yes.

Q Okay. Could you explain your answer.

A Upon arrival, Mission Benghazi wasn't a consulate. It was -- I don't know how to describe it. It was a facility implementing

diplomacy on behalf of Tripoli and perhaps the Main State, but it wasn't a consulate or an embassy. It wasn't an official mission, was my understanding. So that's where I said no.

And I say yes because it was later brought to my attention that the mission was recognized, that they would be staying longer, so that it was very -- it wasn't -- it wasn't determined how long that place was going to be there.

And, at that point, when it was decided by someone in Washington or headquarters that it would stay longer, then it became more of an official, "Okay. We're going to be here for a long duration."

So that's where I said no and yes.

Q Okay. And what was that duration, if you recall?

A I don't recall what -- what the -- how long that would have been. So I don't recall.

Q Okay. Did you have any role in deciding what physical security upgrade should be implemented once the decision was made to remain in Benghazi for this longer period of time?

A I'd like to just clarify.

My active participation of putting in physical security upgrades in Benghazi started from the first day I was there. It didn't matter whether it was an official or unofficial post.

As a security expert, I recognized that there were things that needed to happen, and I started that process of listing them and forwarding that to Diplomatic Security headquarters. And that was for the first, I would say, 2 weeks I was there.

Q Had any of your predecessors also undertaken that exercise?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And so did you essentially inherit some products that had already been written or sent to DS headquarters?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And would those physical security upgrades have been sent through [REDACTED]?

A Yes.

Q Okay. If you could, would you walk us through what you saw as the physical security shortcomings and what you were recommending be implemented to make the compound more secure.

A I asked for -- it was -- I asked for things such as Jersey barriers, and that was to provide a little bit more standoff from our access control areas in one part of the compound.

Q And what's a Jersey barrier?

A The concrete metal barriers you see on our highways here in the U.S. It helps control traffic flow and things of that nature.

Q So nobody can just zoom in?

A Correct.

Q They at least have to go through a maze to get in?

A Yes.

Q It slows them down a bit?

A [Nonverbal response.]

Q Okay.

A So Jersey barriers. I asked for drop-arm barriers.

Q That's just the arm that goes up and down to -- it won't stop a car, but it might slow them down a bit?

A Well, the drop-arms that I put together -- or wanted were actually metal, almost like a telephone pole, with drop-arm barriers.

Q Okay.

A So it's not just like a parking lot you would find in a mall. This was pretty substantial.

I asked for lighting. We had some lighting issues. Some things I were able -- I was able to -- actually, just a matter of turning the lights around.

We had lights lighting up our villas, and I immediately told them, "Let's turn those lights around, face them out," in case someone's watching us or surveilling us, that they would not necessarily get to see all of our comings and goings.

So we talked about Jersey barriers, drop-arms, lighting. Sandbags was another one for fighting positions in case there was an emergency.

Q And what would sandbags do for you?

A Sandbags is just a rudimentary military frame of reference to actually put in a fighting position, somewhere where you could dive behind in case you were being shot at or incoming and direct fire and things of that nature.

I thought, by having some of those sporadically put throughout the compound -- because you never determine when an emergency is going to happen -- that you could actually go behind at least some sandbags

if there was, you know, an issue.

And, to be honest, I remember submitting something -- a list of things, but I can't recall all of them. I just don't recall.

Q Okay. And were any of those upgrades implemented during the 6 or so weeks that you were there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were some still outstanding?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And do you know why some were still outstanding?

A Yes. It's my understanding -- I mean, I was asking for things that were not just readily available in Benghazi. And it wasn't I could go to the drop-arm store. There wasn't one. So they would have to be locally procured and then put together. But during my time in Benghazi, I made it a point for those 30-plus days to implement those things as best I could.

Q Okay. Did you consider these to be the bare-minimum safeguards that were needed for this compound?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you have a longer wish list of other things?

[Bell ringing.]

Mr. [REDACTED]. One more.

Ms. Jackson. Uh-huh.

Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm sorry. Make it easier for her.

Ms. Jackson. Yeah.

BY MS. JACKSON:



Q Okay.

A In an ideal situation, you could never have enough security. From my standpoint as a security professional, I would have asked for, you know, concrete walls and concertina wire and more setback.

But to make the on-the-ground decisions, I asked for what I thought would enable me or future agents coming in to replace me to have a safer environment, and those that I mentioned earlier were part of that.

Q Were you aware of any conversations back at DS headquarters or within Main State that there was an issue over funding for these security upgrades?

A I'm not aware of the conversations that happened back in Washington. I don't know.

Q So no emails between you and [REDACTED] that you recall regarding "We can't get you this because we can't figure out who is going to pay for it"? Anything like that?

A Yeah. I took your previous question as -- and when I said no, I was thinking more upper management.

But, yes, I did have conversations with [REDACTED] regarding funding for security upgrades. He would pass me information. I would pass it to him.

But I know he wasn't making those decisions. It was people above him. And so that's why my previous answer was I don't know what that conversation was.

Q Okay. So you don't know how high up in the --

A Correct.

Q -- in the Department of State these decisions were being made, but you were aware that there were funding issues?

A I was aware that there was funding discussions, whether pro or con, but I don't know who was making those discussions -- or decisions.

Q Okay. Did the holdup of funding impact your receiving any of the physical security upgrades, if you recall?

A I don't recall. And, again, I'll just reiterate. Me asking for these things does not impact the daily mission I still have to conduct, regardless if I get them. So I was moving forward.

I made the professional decisions for them. But, regardless, I still had to do the missions and get people in and out and protected. So I just -- you know, I -- I guess that other -- that's it.

Q Okay. Let me take a step back and ask you: Do you know or do you have an estimate of how large the compound was first when it was A, B, and C, or the three, and then when it was reduced to two?

A I'm horrible with volume of property. I'd be guessing. And I -- honestly, I -- I'd rather not give a guess. But I'll just say significantly large compounds.

Q Okay. Would you say that each individual compound was larger than a football field?

A I'm looking up because I'm trying to put each compound in my head. If I were to just be a satellite and look down on all three compounds and use the perimeter walls as that landmark, I would say

three football fields would be close.

Q Okay. What was the condition of the perimeter walls?

A They were not up to my standard. And my standard would have been, you know, a concrete block. They were porous. You could see through them. And, at some points at some of the perimeter walls, you could actually -- you know, you could push them over.

Q Okay. So that would allow a weapon to be pointed in through those points of access?

A Potentially.

Q Okay. Was that a concern to you when you were there?

A I made it a point to -- for the walls that I'm actually thinking about -- try to cover up that area where people could actually look in and see us. And that was where -- where we were living. And I'm not sure if that's Villa A or C. It's on the end. Because I was worried that people out in the street could see if we were just walking around or we were getting in vehicles or not.

Q Okay. Now, you've stated that it was you and two other agents while you were there.

Was that the number of agents that were allotted for Benghazi?

A Upon arrival in Benghazi, we had three agents. And I didn't know any better whether that was more or less of what we were supposed to have.

But during my time in Benghazi, I remember learning that there was a document that was put out by the Under Secretary that there would be five agents slotted for Benghazi.

Q Okay. And when you say "the Under Secretary," which of the six Under Secretaries would have authored that memo?

A I believe it was Under Secretary Kennedy.

Q So the Under Secretary for Management?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

Ms. Sawyer. Sharon, just to correct, you in the question said he authored the memo. I don't think there's any evidence that he actually authored the memo. So just to be clean on the record.

Ms. Clarke. You said "put out."

Ms. Jackson. I said "put out." So --

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q At any point while you were there did you get up to five agents?

A Yes.

Q And when was that?

A We reached five agents at the very tail end of my tour in Benghazi, and it was only because it was the agents replacing myself and Mr. [REDACTED].

Q So there was just some overlap? Before you left, the new -- the replacement agents came in?

A Correct. So just to make sure I'm clear, there was three of us on the ground at the time, myself, Agent [REDACTED], and Agent [REDACTED]. And we were being replaced by Agent [REDACTED], and I want to say [REDACTED]. And those two agents were coming in to replace us. So, for

a brief moment, we actually had five agents on the ground.

Q Okay. That brief moment, was that a matter of days or a week, if you recall?

A It was not a week, and it may have been as limited to 3 to 5 days. And it was a timing issue. Mr. [REDACTED] was leaving on his first 30 days, and myself and Mr. [REDACTED] voluntarily extended.

Q Okay. I see that my time is now up for the first hour. So we're going to go off the record, take a break, and then resume in a few minutes. Okay?

A Thank you.

[Recess.]

[REDACTED] Exhibit Nos. 1 and 2  
were marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q During the break, it was decided that the minority's questions were going to be somewhat limited. So they have offered that the majority committee staff continue with the questioning until we have finished our questioning and then they will ask any follow-up questions that they have. So we're going to continue with the minority questions, Agent [REDACTED].

A Okay.

Q When we broke, we were talking about the number of agents that were there when you arrived and then the number that were there when you left.

And during the break, I've also asked you to review two documents that you have before you as Exhibit No. 1 and Exhibit No. 2. I'd like to turn your attention first to Exhibit No. 1.

And can you describe what -- this, say, three-page document at the top is marked as "Unclassified//SBU." At the top, it also says "U.S. Special Mission Benghazi Regional Security Office." And it also says "Diplomatic Security Turn Over Notes."

Can you describe for us what this three-page document is.

A This document is a description of what has happened in

Benghazi, gives a little bit of a background as well as describes the mission in Benghazi and provides -- or it hopefully provides the reader a synopsis of what to expect for he or she taking over as either ARSO or RSO.

Q And did you prepare or receive this document when you were in Benghazi?

A Did I prepare this one or did I prepare one like it? It is a custom for DS agents to have turnover notes each time new agents come onto the compound and take over.

So this one here looks like one that I put together -- or may have put together. I can't be sure. But this is what it is. It's just a turnover note.

Q Okay. Does Exhibit 1 describe Benghazi as you experienced it when you were there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And, if I am correct, if you did not prepare this one, you prepared a similar document?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. All right. Now let's turn to Exhibit 2 before you, which is a five-page document. At the top, it is marked "Sensitive But Unclassified," and it is entitled "Benghazi: Security Environment & Threat Assessment."

Have you seen this document before, Agent [REDACTED]?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And under what circumstances did you see this

document before?

A In the matter of preparation. I was with counsel, and we just kind of went over possible documents that have my name on it or are perhaps derived from me. And so I remember looking at this one.

Q Was this a document that was prepared when you were in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you prepare it?

A I worked in collaboration with the other ARSOs. And, as you can tell, on page -- the last page, even the final sentence -- I remember writing that because I was in the midst of turning over to another RSO.

Q So the very last paragraph where it says, "Questions should be directed to RSO" -- something redacted -- "As of Feb. 5, please contact RSO" -- redacted -- "via the Benghazi RSO TOC at" -- and a telephone number redacted -- is that the time when you initially were going to leave Benghazi?

A The reason for the February 5 date on this document was I was trying to make a transition with the new agent and hand over the reins, have them actually be in charge, yet, I would still be there as an adviser in case he or she needed help.

Q So your replacement, [REDACTED], was going to be there as of February 5?

A He was there as of February 5. And I was still on the ground in Benghazi, but I wanted people to understand that, if they were going



to refer to this document, that I would no longer be there, you know, within days of this document.

Q Okay. But you and the other two agents who were in Benghazi were responsible for authoring this document, Exhibit No. 2?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And were you requested to prepare this document?

A Yes.

Q And what do you recall about that request?

A Like the other document, this is something that agents do prior to handing over a post or something like Mission Benghazi.

I remember speaking with [REDACTED] regarding this threat assessment in that I had been taking notes throughout my time on the ground in Benghazi and had my agents -- actually, Agent [REDACTED], primarily -- looking at the previous threat assessment that was done prior to our arrival and augmenting it with different things that happened during our timeframe there.

So in speaking with Mr. [REDACTED], I helped Agent [REDACTED] put this together, and I was waiting for Mr. [REDACTED] to get back to me because he wanted an ITA, an intelligence threat assessment, done from Washington from their perspective as well so that it would be an all-encompassing threat assessment.

Q So would it be accurate to describe Exhibit 2 as your portion of that overall encompassing document?

A This is my unclassified portion of this document. Yes.

Q Okay. So are you saying that there's a classified portion

of this document, also?

A There may be classified documents regarding threat assessment that would obviously not be included in this.

Q Okay. Do you know for a fact that there was a classified companion to this document?

A I don't know.

Q Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi, did you receive a similar-type document?

A I believe there was one on file, but I do not recall the date of it and how accurate it was, whether it was a month before my arrival or previous. But there was a document there.

Q But in your training and experience as a Diplomatic Security agent, a security environment and threat assessment is a regular and routine document that is prepared and handed over to the subsequent RSO?

A In my training -- I can only speak of myself -- that's how I conduct business. And, therefore, yes, for me, if I'm coming into an environment, I would expect one, as should the next agent taking over from me. And, hence, this document was produced.

Q Okay. And is that the same for Exhibit No. 1, the turnover notes? You, as an RSO, would expect to receive turnover notes and you, as a person, would prepare turnover notes for your successor?

A The answer is yes. As you refer to Exhibit 1, I don't know if I actually drafted this one or not. It just doesn't ring a bell to me. I don't see anything in there that says it came directly from

me, but I could be wrong.

Q Okay. But do you recall receiving turnover notes when you arrived in Benghazi?

A I -- yes.

Q Okay. And when you turned over to Agent [REDACTED], did you have turnover notes to provide to him when he arrived?

A When Agent [REDACTED] arrived -- because we had a lengthy turnover -- I don't recall actually handing him a turnover note because I voluntarily decided to extend to assist him. But, as we discussed earlier, it is customary to pass it over. So --

Q Okay. Now I want to direct your attention to Document 2, Exhibit 2, and the last page.

In the second full paragraph on that page, the second sentence says, "Numerous Islamic extremists, including dozens with experience fighting coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, are in the area and have ready access to arms."

Do you see that sentence?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And do you recall that you or Agent [REDACTED] or someone decided to include that sentence in this report?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Can you tell us some background about deciding to include this sentence in this report.

A Although the sentence itself is not classified, I think putting that sentence in there derived from classified information.

And so, therefore, putting it in there was a highlight to the reader that these type of people are in this, I would say, AOR, area of operations -- region -- responsibility. Sorry.

Q AOR --

A AOR, area of responsibility.

Q All right.

A So this is just to highlight to the reader that, "Listen, this is a very dangerous area, and there's all kinds of players here in Libya."

Q Okay. Did that particular threat increase or decrease in the time that you were in Benghazi?

A I don't know that it increased or decreased. I couldn't go either way on that. But just the fact that it was there is enough for someone like myself or a DS agent.

Q And then in the -- what would be the third-to-the-last paragraph of this page, I quote from the report, "There are reports of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) smuggling weapons and explosives out of Libya to neighboring countries. AQIM and other transnational terrorist groups could try to take advantage of a deteriorating security environment in Benghazi or a post-Qadhafi power vacuum in Tripoli."

Do you recall the reasons why this particular paragraph was included?

A I believe this paragraph was also included based on our intelligence and perhaps some classified information. And without

being able to put classified material in this, again, this paragraph and sentences provide the reader with a perspective that we're in a dangerous place.

Q And did this document go to anyone other than your successor DS agents? Did it go to DS headquarters? Did it go to ITA? If you know, was it disseminated beyond your successor DS agents in Benghazi?

[Bell ringing.]

A This document --

Mr. [REDACTED]. Can you type during this?

This document was forwarded to and would have been sent to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. And, as I stated earlier -- I mentioned the acronym ITA. I don't know for a fact that it was sent to them, but I would think that Mr. [REDACTED] would have done that.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. And what does "ITA" stand for?

A "Intelligence threat assessment." It would go to our threat assessment folks within the Diplomatic Security Service.

Q Okay. And without going into the content of what you might have sent, did you or the other agents supplement this document with any classified reporting to ITA?

A We did not put any supplements, as far as this document is concerned. If an agent were to be coming out to Benghazi and they wanted to see this document, it would likely -- as long as it was a classified area, they would have this document and also have a threat assessment provided with it, but it wasn't necessarily something I

produced.

Q I think I may need a little further elaboration on that.

Who would have produced -- would the other document be a supplement to this or what would this other document be?

Mr. Evers. If you know.

Mr. [REDACTED]. Just to be clear, this document is put together by myself --

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And by "this document," you mean Exhibit 2.

A I'm sorry. Yes. Exhibit 2.

This document was produced by myself and the agents on the ground. We would have given that to Mr. [REDACTED], who, like I said, would likely push it forward. To whom exactly I do not know.

And in response to my -- my answer of the last question is that a person coming to Benghazi would've had access to read this one, which is the -- Exhibit 2, and then they may have been provided, if they requested, an intelligence threat assessment of Benghazi from a classified perspective.

Q Okay. Did you have access to similar-type documents prior to coming to Benghazi?

A I had access to it. But, again, I was not in Washington. I was in Georgia at the time. So I was not able to look at any classified -- I don't recall reading any classified material about Benghazi prior to my arrival.

Q Okay. Did you have to be physically located in Washington

to have access to that classified information?

A For my circumstances at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, we had no classified material access. We didn't have classified safes or computers enabled to read classified material.

Q Okay. What about if -- for those agents who came out of field offices? Would they have had -- because you were in the New York field office at one time.

When you were in the New York field office, did you have access to classified information?

A When I was in New York, I did have access to classified information.

Q Okay. Do you know if all the field offices have access to classified information?

A I do not know.

Q Okay. You and another agent extended until about February 2012, as I understand it. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was there a particular event or reason why you felt the need to stay in Benghazi in February of 2012?

A Yes.

Q And what was that reason?

A The anniversary of 17 February was coming up.

Q Okay. And why was that important in Libya?

A Well, in Libya, as we discussed, the QRF, or quick reaction force, was also known as 17th Feb. The significance of that date, is

my understanding, had everything to do with the overthrow of Qadhafi, which actually stemmed and began in Benghazi or Eastern Libya.

Q Okay. So just to ensure that I'm understanding correctly, the revolution that overthrew the Qadhafi regime began on or about February 17?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And the revolution started in Benghazi?

A That's my interpretation.

Q Okay. And did that pose a security risk then for you and the other agents in protecting U.S. government personnel?

A Yes.

Q And what were those security concerns that you had?

A Like any anniversary of a terrorist attack, which I'm sure everyone in this room is familiar with, like 9/11, in law enforcement overseas, we have experienced, unfortunately, incidents that happen on significant dates.

So it's not out of the realm when the 17th Feb date was coming up in 2012 that there may be protests or may be some action against expatriates or just amongst the Libyans themselves. So I wanted to be prepared for that.

Q Okay. And did the Libyans have ready access to weapons, explosives, and other types of items that could do harm to people?

A Are you asking if all Libyans --

Q In your estimation, were -- well, let me take a step back. In certain countries like England, guns are generally prohibited.



In other countries, guns are more prolific.

Where did Libya, and especially -- specifically the Benghazi area, fall on that continuum of virtually no weapons to everyone has a weapon?

Does that help?

A Yes. Thank you for providing some context.

Q Uh-huh.

A For Benghazi, weapons on persons within that greater area was normal. We would hear gunfire routinely, not necessarily towards us, but celebratory gunfire and things of that nature. So yes.

Q Okay. Were you able to make any distinction between the type of gunfire you heard, if you, based on your training and experience, could distinguish between handgun fire versus AK-47 fire versus more advanced weapons?

Again, on the continuum of weaponry, were you able to tell what type of weapons or did you know from your personal observations of what type of weapons were prolific in and around the Benghazi area?

A For the record, I'm no weapons expert. But with my experience, I could tell if it was a pistol or perhaps a machine gun going off, or it wasn't uncommon to hear anti-aircraft guns go off.

Q And what do you mean by "anti-aircraft guns"?

A "Anti-aircraft guns" are high-caliber weapons that are made to shoot down aircraft.

Q Are they often called RPGs or is that something different?

A That is something different, ma'am.

Q Okay.

A RPG is a rocket-propelled grenade similar -- it probably makes a similar noise like a mortar. But an AAA, anti-aircraft artillery, piece is much larger and usually it's pointing towards the sky, looking for a target.

Q Okay. Is that sometimes known as a MANPAD?

A No.

Q Okay.

A And, again, for the record, I am no weapons expert.

Q And by my questions, obviously, neither am I in this respect. I'm just trying to figure out where everything fits on the continuum.

Based on your visual observations and in conjunction with the type of firing that you heard, do you have an opinion as to the most prolific type of weapon that was used by people in and around Benghazi?

A I would say the AK-47 would be a weapon that -- again, I'm no weapons expert, but I would say that's the noise that would be most prevalent in that area.

Q Okay. And I believe you said you would hear gunfire daily.

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was there a particular time of the day that you would hear gunfire more often than other times of the day?

A To give a definitive answer would be speculation.

Q Okay. Would gunfire occur throughout the nighttime, through the overnight hours?

A There would be what I would consider celebratory gunfire on some evenings. So I would hear that.

Q Okay. Were you able to distinguish between celebratory gunfire and other types of gunfire?

A No.

Q Okay. But you observed that AK-47s and similar-type weapons would be fired during celebrations?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were there any security incidents that occurred while you were in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Could you -- and I know you may not be able to give us precise dates. But if you could say early on, in the middle, at the end, to the best of your ability, would you describe for us those security incidents that occurred.

A I recall one incident where we had to use the alarm -- the duck-and-cover alarm and it was reported -- I do not recall if it was over the radio or if it was just by voice -- that somebody had jumped the wall.

Q And what did that turn out to be?

A It turned out to be a local hire who decided not to walk around the perimeter and access the compound the proper way, and this person decided to just jump the wall.

Q Okay. How did the duck-and-cover go?

A The duck-and-cover went very loudly, and we reacted in the

manner that we were trained in.

Q Okay. So everyone reacted appropriately?

A Yes.

Q Okay. What about any other security incident?

A I don't want to mix them together. We had one jumping the wall. I don't recall the other one, exact details.

And, again, for the record, I've served in many high-threat places. And security incidents are, unfortunately, part of my job, and I don't want to mix the two.

Q Okay. Sure.

Do you recall any security incidents involving checkpoints when you were out on movement?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Would you tell us what you can recall.

A In Benghazi, in order to get to the airport, you had to drive through impromptu checkpoints. And some of them we knew they were there and some were just -- sometimes they just showed up on the road.

Two of my agents were moving to the airport late at night. I was actually still on the compound when they called me and told me that they were being held at gunpoint.

Q Okay. And what, if anything, did you do?

A In that situation, me personally, there's not much I can do physically. But I made contact with 17th Feb QRF folks who, in turn, sent out a vehicle to their known location, since they had the language ability, and they were also able to get in touch via mobile phones with

folks who could then maybe diffuse the situation.

Q And did the situation get diffused?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And how did it resolve itself?

A I don't recall the particulars of how it was resolved, but it was resolved.

Q Okay. Do you recall any incident in which there was a stop at a checkpoint in which the Libyan nationals were inquiring as to whether Envoy Stevens was in the car?

A No. That does not ring a bell at all.

Q Okay. Were there protests or demonstrations that occurred in and around Benghazi when you were there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And were they routine or sporadic?

A Protests in Benghazi were -- I'll use the term "commonality." It was known to happen. We were aware of it.

Q Okay. Would you have advance notice when they were going to be?

A We may receive information from either the ex-pats in the area, like I mentioned earlier, the British, or even our locally engaged staff who may have heard something.

Q Okay. And was there a common area where the protests would occur?

A A lot of the protests occurred down near the water area and at government buildings, which was on the coast of Benghazi.

Three years later, to give you a definitive location, it's just too -- it's not there. I'm sorry.

Q Was there an area called Freedom Square?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Is this the area that you were talking about where the government buildings were?

A I don't remember if -- the government buildings there at Freedom Square. But now that you mention the name Freedom Square, that's a very relevant name and a known location for protests.

Q Okay. And when you say that protests were fairly common -- I'm sort of paraphrasing here -- would that mean daily or weekly or twice a week? Could you give us a little more definition to that answer, if you can.

A Protests in Benghazi occurred. And to say definitively whether it would be daily or weekly, it would not be accurate. But it was prevalent.

Q Okay. Was there a particular time of the day that protests would occur? Mornings? Noon? Early evening? Nighttime?

A There was no definitive time. I don't recall there being anything significant to sunrise or sunset or --

Q Okay. Do you recall any protests occurring after dark?

A I believe there were protests that occurred after dark. But to give you a timeframe, whether it was the beginning, middle or end of my time in Benghazi, I don't know.

Q Okay. Are there any other security incidents that you

recall occurring while you were in Benghazi?

A No.

Q Okay. Were there any other threats to U.S. government personnel generally or to the political officer specifically while you were there?

A No.

Q Any threats to the compound, that you're aware of, while you were there?

A I'm taking time to -- because I want to answer accurately. I will say this: Being in Benghazi as the senior RSO, I felt there were threats every day in Benghazi. Whether they were directed toward me, my agents, the PO or the IMO, I don't know.

Q Okay. So you were on personal high alert every day?

A Yes.

Q Okay. I want to take a few minutes and switch to the local guard force and the QRF and ask you some questions about them. Okay?

A Yes.

Q Did you have a local guard force when you arrived?

A Yes.

Q And would you describe that local guard force -- the number, their duties and responsibilities -- and just give us a description of who they were and what they did.

A I don't recall the number of personnel that were on the local guard force. However, the local guards were Libyans who provided, like I said, access control.

They would help with people visiting the compound, help to search them. They assisted with escorting people to locations within the compound. So perhaps, if somebody comes in the compound, they would walk them to the PO's office or my office.

They were also my -- or what I would consider my early warning system. Having them out on the compound -- because I could not be everywhere, nor could the agents -- they were able to provide us an insight if something occurred.

And they were issued -- what do you call it? They were issued like clickers, you know. So if there was an emergency, they could hit the button that would sound the alarm.

And that's what those guards -- they were not well educated. They weren't -- well, I'd like to retract that, if I could. I don't know if they were educated or not, but --

Q Okay. Did you have issues with their performance?

A I didn't have issues with their performance.

Q While you were there, was their contract terminated?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And do you know why it was terminated?

A I don't know the whole reason why it was terminated.

Q Okay. Do you know part of the reason why it was terminated?

A Yes.

Q And what was that?

A During my time there, it came to the forefront that the local guard force contract was also coexistent with the food contract.



Somehow prior to my arrival that all was put in place. It was all one.

Q Is that typical, in your experience, of other places you've been as the RSO?

A No. Other places as RSO, the local guard force contract is an RSO contract.

Q Separate and distinct from everything else?

A Yes.

Q Okay. But this one was combined?

A I'd like to make one caveat.

You were mentioning whether or not the LGF is just one contract for the RSO. We have other contracts like surveillance detection units and things of that nature. But for this description of Benghazi, there was this combination for whatever reason.

Q Okay. And that existed prior to your getting there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And was there problems then with the overall life services contract?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what were those problems?

A I don't know all the reasons for the issues with the food contract, but it was based off the principal officer and the IMO no longer wanted to continue to contract with the food portion. They weren't happy with it. Obviously, that had implications on my program because they were tied together.

Q Okay. Did you have any concerns or issues with the local

guard force not showing up to work?

A I heard from the 17th Feb QRF that they, by de facto, would help me manage the local guards. And to that end, they would let me know, "Hey, somebody showed up late today," at which point I could, you know, give some disciplinary action or let the person go.

Q Okay. So, at some point, the life services contract was being terminated while you were there?

A Yes.

Q Okay. What security issues did that pose for you if you were losing your local guard force?

A Well, the fear was that the person who held the food contract and the local guard force contract would be jaded and that person -- I don't recall the name or the company -- would then just take everything off the compound and walk away.

Q Okay. And what security risk did that pose for you, as the head security guy at the compound?

A Well, that would have taken away one of our -- what we consider concentric rings of security. And that would have taken away one of those rings.

Q And how many concentric rings of security do you normally have at an overseas post?

Mr. Evers. If you can say.

Mr. [REDACTED]. I can say, on consulates and embassies, usually, we have several layers. But to go in detail on what those layers are would be more of a classified setting.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Well, you've described three layers to us today. If I may summarize, you've got your local guard force, your quick response force, and the Diplomatic Security agents.

Are those three of the rings that you would expect at an overseas post?

A No.

Q No? Okay.

Can you correct me in how I've missummarized that.

A Your summary for Benghazi is accurate. But you stated is this the three concentric rings for an overseas post. In general, would not be applicable.

Q So Benghazi was treated differently from a security perspective than other overseas posts?

A I don't know if it was treated differently. But I can tell you what was on the ground at the time when I was there.

Q Okay. And are those three that I've described what was on the ground at the time?

A Yes.

Q Were there any other security assets on the ground at the time?

Mr. Evers. If you can say.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q It's just a yes or no.

A I'll defer it to a classified area.

Mr. Evers. If you can say in a setting yes or no whether there were additional security measures --

Ms. Jackson. Without saying what they were.

Mr. Evers. -- you can say.

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Okay. But any further elaboration would be in a classified setting?

A Yes. And I'm not trying to be difficult.

Q No.

A I just wanted to be accurate.

Q That's why I asked it as a yes-or-no question, so that we didn't have to go any further.

Do you recall whether there was any type of interim local guard force contract between the termination of the life services contract and the letting of a new contract?

A I don't believe there was an interim. I believe what occurred -- and this is right near the end of my time in Benghazi -- was that the IMO and PO -- principal officer -- worked with the gentleman who owned that contract to just try to parcel off the food portion, maintain the security portion, all the while, perhaps -- all the while, we were going to look for another contract so that this wouldn't happen again.

Q Okay. And is that what was in place when you left Benghazi in February of 2012?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were you aware of any objections or issues to doing it that way?

A No.

Q Okay. As an RSO at an overseas post, do you generally have responsibility for vetting of the local guard force?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what's entailed in vetting the local guard force?

A In my experience at the posts that I've mentioned at the opening of this meeting, for local guard force, we would run a background check on each individual in whichever country they were from.

For example, if someone is from the Philippines, we would run a check through the RSO and the Philippines to ensure that that person did not have any derogatory information that would negate them from being employed with us, whether it was when I was in Dubai or Dhahran or somewhere else.

In Benghazi, I arrived and adopted the local guard force program. They were already on the ground and implemented.

Q Okay. Do you know, was there any vetting of the local guard force in Benghazi?

A I do not know whether or not they were vetted prior to my arrival or after.

Q Okay. Does the RSO generally keep records of any vetting

that is done?

A If there was vetting completed on an individual who was on a local guard force contract with an RSO at an embassy or consulate, there should be a record of it.

Q Did you come across any such records when you were in Benghazi?

A I don't recall seeing records on the local guard force contract.

Q Okay. Did you acquire any new members of the local guard force while you were there?

A I don't remember hiring or firing anybody during my timeframe.

Q Okay. You stated under the vetting that you would check for any type of criminal records.

Are there other checks in other areas, such as foreign counterintelligence, financial, other indicia of stability within the community, that you would normally check to vet a local guard?

A Yes.

Q Okay. I've named a few.

Are those areas that you would normally check?

A Those are areas we would normally check. And I would think that, depending on the post, whether it was a high-threat post or one in someplace like Moscow, there is a little more involved.

So different embassies and different consulates, depending on the access of that particular local guard, whatever their posting is,

whether it would be a perimeter outside post or an internal post, there might be additional vetting done, depending on their particular job.

Q Okay. So is vetting, in your opinion, more important when you're at a high-threat post or a post that might have higher foreign counterintelligence implications?

A I think it's fair to say that vetting, in general, is a good thing to have regarding the local guard force.

Q Okay. Now turning to the Feb 17 militia that was your quick response force --

Mr. Evers. Can we take a break?

Ms. Jackson. Yes. We can go off the record and take a break. Let's take about a 10-minute break.

[Recess.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Agent [REDACTED], when we broke for just a few minutes, we were talking about the February 17th militia being employed as -- or being there as the quick response force.

Were they actually employed?

A Yes.

Q Okay. They were paid in some way by the Benghazi Mission?

A Yes.

Q Did you know how they were paid?

A It was a stipend.

Q Okay. Were they paid in cash by mission personnel or were they, you know, electronic funds transferred to a bank account, if such

existed in Benghazi?

A I don't recall how they were paid. I just know that there was a stipend involved.

Q Okay. Was there any -- and what was the general nature of the duties and responsibilities of the Feb 17 militia?

A 17th Feb was there to assist my office in providing security to Chief of Mission personnel in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And I believe you described that there was a smaller residence on one of the end compounds that they resided in. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And so they would be there 24/7?

A They -- obviously, depending on the numbers, they would come in and out. But they had access to that part of the compound 24/7.

Q Did you have an understanding of how many would be there at any given time?

A We didn't have a definitive number. But on my time, during those 30-plus days, it would fluctuate. But it would normally be around three.

Q Okay. At any time did you ask for additional protection by Feb 17?

A I did not ask 17th Feb for additional protection from them. I did ask them at one point for a vehicle outside of the perimeter, a marked vehicle. And so I believe they actually went to, like, the local police.



Q Okay. Did you ask that to be a permanent addition or did you need it for a specific purpose?

A It wasn't a permanent position. I just remember asking for it near the end. I don't recall why I did. I just remember asking for it.

Q Did the approaching anniversary of the revolution play any part in your request?

A No. I think it had -- requesting that was actually because of where the street was. It was on the street that was less traveled by, and I wanted to have at least some kind of presence there, in my line of work, as a deterrent. If somebody saw a police car, maybe they would be like, "Okay. Let's go somewhere else to rob a house" or whatever.

Q Okay. And I believe you said earlier -- but correct me if I misremembered this -- you used the Feb 17 personnel to help you make movements for the political officer, the IMO, when they needed to be out and about in Benghazi. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And they would either travel in the second vehicle or work to give you information regarding the site you were going to or both?

A I would use them to provide advance work. So if I knew I was going somewhere, I'd ask them about the place. Maybe they could go out there the day before.

And then we would ask maybe one of them to come with us, since

they knew the area better than anyone and had better language skills.

Q And I think I forgot to ask this earlier.

But what were the types of meetings that the principal officer was having in and around Benghazi?

A I don't recall a specific meeting and what was said at those meetings. But he had -- you know, a principal officer may have one or two meetings a day.

Q Were they generally with government officials?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And would there be meetings on compound?

A Yes.

Q But you would generally have one or two movements off compound every day or workdays?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall a time towards the end of your tenure in Benghazi that there was a dispute with Feb 17 as to whether they were going to support off-compound moves?

A I don't recall that.

Q Okay. Do you recall whether any members of the Feb 17 Brigade that were assigned to the compound quit due to lack of pay?

A I don't remember anyone quitting during my time of quitting.

Q Okay. It has been a few years.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Let me hand you what I am marking as Exhibit No. 3, which is at the top an email from Agent [REDACTED] dated Saturday, January 28, 2012, at 5:02 a.m. And the subject matter is "Benghazi RSO SITREP for 28 January 2012." And the document is marked "Unclassified."

If you would, take a moment and look through this document, and then I'll ask you if you recall it and ask you a few more questions about that.

A Okay.

Okay. I've read it.

Q Okay. All right. And Agent [REDACTED] was one of the Diplomatic Security agents assigned when you were there. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Is this what you described earlier as a situation report, or SITREP?

A This looks to be a SITREP from Benghazi.

Q And this is something that you would have collaborated with or assisted in writing during your tenure there. Is that correct?

A As I stated earlier, my agents were given the authority to submit a SITREP. I only ask them that we -- I be included on it if there was anything major, and they had the authority to send out the SITREP.

Q Okay. I see on the "Cc" line that it says "Benghazi RSO." Is that how they would have cc'd you?

Mr. Evers. If you remember.

Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't recall. I remember we talked earlier about this. I just don't remember this email address.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay.

A I don't see my name in here yet on this document.

Q Right.

So your other state.gov account is not listed in the "Cc" line or the "To" line. Is that correct?

A Correct.

Q Okay. I see two email addresses in the "Cc" line that is [REDACTED]@gmail.com and [REDACTED]@gmail.com.

Do you recall those email addresses?

A It's been a long time. I have no doubt that this is a legitimate document for hearings on Benghazi. But, honestly, I don't remember this.

Q Okay. And you may not remember this. But if I could direct your attention to the paragraph this is entitled "Security/Environment" and the second bullet point that says -- I quote -- "Two TNC assets assigned to aid in protecting the U.S. Mission compound have permanently left their positions."

Do you have a recollection of that occurring?

A I don't remember that -- the fact that two of them left. But, as you read more in that same paragraph, if you don't mind me saying the next sentence, "Information gathered from the TNC commander indicates their departure was due to dissatisfaction with their

stipend, their lack of payment by the new GoL, and the need to find work in the local economy," this rings a bell. That sentence rings a bell --

Q Okay.

A -- for me.

Q That you may have lost people due to low pay or lack of pay?

A Not that I've lost people. I just remember there was dissatisfaction with the stipend. I don't remember actually, like, guys saying, "We're out of here."

Q Okay.

A I don't remember.

Q And then the next bullet point, which would be the third bullet point under this section, says -- and I quote -- "Roving TNC patrols around the perimeter of the compound have terminated. Information gathered from the TNC commander indicates that their departure was due to the same reasons listed above."

Do you recall that, having, hopefully, refreshed?

A It has refreshed my memory. And this coincides with the previous question regarding a uniform presence. And that's -- this roving patrol was that uniform presence that I discussed earlier. And this makes sense to me. It's kind of coming back to me.

Q Okay. And then, again, this was January 28, 2012, towards the end of your stay in Benghazi?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And when it talks about TNC assets in this section,

is that the same thing as the Feb 17th Brigade?

A 17th Feb derived from my -- I believe it's Transnational -- I forgot what the TNC stood for.

Q How about -- does it sound familiar to be the Transitional National Council?

A That does sound familiar.

So yes. Yes to the fact that 17th Feb and TNC may be interchanged in terminology.

Q Okay. So when you or Agent [REDACTED] writes about TNC assets, you're referring to the Feb 17th Brigade employees at -- or contractors at the compound?

A On this document, it appears that's what he has done.

Q Okay. To your knowledge, was there any vetting of these QRF guards?

A I don't know.

Q Okay. You did none?

A I did none while I was there. I don't recall ever vetting them.

Q And you don't recall having any other agents conduct any vetting of the guards?

A No.

Q Okay. Do you recall coming across any files that individuals prior to you conducted any vetting of the TNC assets or Feb 17th guards?

A No.

Q Okay. Do you know how the Feb 17 guards were selected? Did you ever learn that while you were there?

A No.

Q Okay. Just generally, why is vetting important?

A Are we talking in the context of guards? Are we talking QRF? Or are we talking about a security clearance here in Congress?

Q Let's talk about vetting of the local guard force and the QRF forces at an overseas post.

A Vetting is part of the hiring process. And, I mean, that's just something that takes place.

Q Okay. Did Benghazi have tripwires?

A I am looking up and to the left because I want to make sure --

Q No. You were looking into the far recesses of your mind, going through a few cobwebs.

Mr. Evers. Do you know what she means?

Mr. [REDACTED]. I know what tripwires are. For me -- tripwires, for me, as an RSO in Benghazi, are right at the area of classified information. But a tripwire, in general, is an event that may occur to cause myself or somebody else to then react to that event.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Okay. Do you recall whether Benghazi had written tripwires?

A I don't recall whether they did or did not.

Q Okay. When a wire is tripped, what, if any, action or reaction is generally required?

A It depends on the tripped wire.

Q So different wires have different consequences if they're tripped?

A I wouldn't use the word "consequences." I would say have different reactions.

Q Okay. And, generally, that's spelled out in a document?

A Yes.

Q Have you seen written tripwires at other posts you've been at?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And would the reactions also be spelled out?

A Yes.

Q Did those reactions generally require a specific action or that a meeting be called to discuss the security situation?

Mr. Evers. Are you asking about -- sorry.

Ms. Jackson. Generally.

Mr. Evers. Generally. So not just Benghazi.

Ms. Jackson. Yes.

Mr. [REDACTED]. The answer is yes -- yes, that tripwires may cause an action and/or ask for a meeting to occur.

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Ms. Sawyer. Sharon, you might be close.

Ms. Jackson. I have, like, two or three more questions.

Ms. Sawyer. Great.

BY MS. JACKSON:



Q All right. Last area.

Do you recall whether Benghazi had an evacuation plan?

A Yes.

Q Do you recall whether it was rewritten or reworked while you were there?

A Yes.

Q Did you have any involvement in that?

A Yes.

Q And what, if any, involvement did you have in that?

A I worked in collaboration with the two agents on the ground on the evacuation plan, to update it and ensure -- or -- to the best of my ability that it would be a document that we could rely upon in case of an emergency.

Q Do you recall why you felt it needed to be updated?

A I don't recall why. But for me personally, it's something in that type of environment that I would rely upon. And, therefore, I would have taken the initiative to do that.

Q Okay. If I said that it was updated because the prior version relied on DOD access for evacuation, does that trigger any recollection for you?

A No.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. I think that's all the questions I have. And why don't we go off the record for a moment.

[Recess.]

Ms. Jackson. Let's go back on the record.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Yes. My final question that I always ask is -- Agent [REDACTED], thank you very much for coming today. Thank you very much for being sleep-deprived as you came here today with the time change that you've undergone. We appreciate your cooperation with this committee.

And before I conclude, I do always ask, as we've taken breaks and as you sit here now, is there any question that has been asked or answer that you gave that you think needs further elaboration, clarification, or retraction? Just to give you a final opportunity to elaborate or clarify anything that we've discussed today.

A We had a question and answer regarding ITA and a classified -- potentially a classified product that would be at headquarters.

I have no knowledge if there was one or there is one or one was produced. I mentioned that -- you know, in passing, I mentioned that, but I don't even know if there was one.

Q So as you sit here today, that, if one was produced, you don't recall it being shared with you?

A Correct.

Q Okay. All right. Anything else? Any other -- we covered a lot of territory here today --

A No, ma'am.

Q -- for things that happened several years ago. So -- but, again, thank you very much. And thank you for your service.

A You're welcome.

Ms. Jackson. And we'll go off the record now and switch places.

[Recess.]

Ms. Robinson. We can go back on the record. Thank you.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q Hi. I'm, just a reminder, Kendal Robinson, detailed to the minority staff, and I'm going to -- here with some of my colleagues and we just have a couple more questions for you. It's 1 o'clock right now.

And before I turn it over to my colleagues, I just wanted to ask a couple questions about the exhibits that were provided earlier.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q We can first look at Exhibit Number 3. We had read several sentences from this exhibit earlier, and I just wanted to circle back on one of the sentences that we hadn't discussed, which is in the second bullet under the Security/Environment page, and it's going to be the last two sentences in that section where it says, no hostility was reported between the two TNC assets who left and the U.S. Mission. The relationship within the TNC assets remains positive.

And as you discussed earlier, the TNC was a reference to the 17th of February. Is that correct?

A Yes. And I'd just like to point out, you mentioned the

word, the relationship within. That's not what my document says.

Q Right. The relationship with TNC assets remains positive.

A Okay.

Q My mistake. So, in your understanding from while you were there, did you feel that this is a true statement for how you perceived relationships between the 17th of February and the mission?

A Correct.

Q And were you aware of any issues while you were there or complaints about the 17th of February and how they were performing their functions with the mission?

A No.

Q Okay. Thank you for following up on that.

And I wanted to also look at Exhibit 1, if you wouldn't mind. Looking at the second page, I wanted to look at the last two -- well, the last sentence of the first paragraph where it's talking about -- the sentence is the -- about the QRF, they are truly a great asset to the mission and are also extremely professional.

Was that the experience that you had with working with the QRF?

A Yes.

Q And, again, since we talked about the QRF earlier, would you remind us who the QRF were?

A The QRF were what we called the 17th Feb Brigade.

Q Okay. Thank you for refreshing us on that.

So when you were there and when you left, from your understanding, the relationship that the U.S. Mission had with 17th of February was

a positive one and a professional one?

A Yes.

Q Would you have any other, you know -- would you characterize -- have any other characterizations for the 17th of February and working with them?

A I think overall for the 30 plus days I was there, I walked away with that same assumption, that they were professional in nature and that we had no derogatory issues with them.

Q And that when you requested assistance or -- that they were responsive to any requests that were made of them as far as you were aware?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And then I just wanted to note that on the first page, I don't know if you can talk to this or not, but there's the last sentence of the first paragraph that states, although Benghazi is no longer the headquarters of the NTC, it is still a great asset in the transition of Libya as a democracy.

Can you speak to that at all about the importance of having a presence in Benghazi?

A Unfortunately, I cannot.

Q Okay. That is certainly understandable.

Ms. Robinson. Was there anything else that you wanted to cover?

Ms. Sawyer. On those two?

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Just returning briefly to Exhibit 3, that same

Security/Environment paragraph that we were just talking about.

A Yes, ma'am.

Q You see that final bullet, it says, ROS -- RSO staff is taking steps to fill in security gaps left by the departing TNC assets.

Do you recall what steps you guys were taking at the time?

A Honestly, I do not recall what steps were being taken. And if I recall earlier testimony, I don't even remember that two people actually departed, so my apologies.

Q So is it fair to -- No. That's perfectly fine. I think that's it.

Ms. Robinson. So I'm going to --

Ms. Sawyer. Unless you --

Ms. Robinson. No. I'm sorry. I just had one --

Ms. Sawyer. Go ahead.

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q No. I just wanted to ask you, we also mentioned about protests earlier, and I was just curious, in your experience while you were there, did you ever see protests turn violent?

A Did I -- I did not personally see protests turn violent.

Q Did you hear about protests turning violent?

A Yes.

Q How many times do you recall hearing that protests turned violent?

A I recall one offhand, and that came from the Brits, who advised us that they were on a venue that ended up turning violent,

and they advised us of that.

Q And do you recall any more detail about that event and how it -- in what way it turned violent, you know, what was the outcome of the violence or the event?

A I don't recall.

Ms. Robinson. Okay. I'll turn it over.

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q Mr. [REDACTED], I just want to actually follow up in the same vein regarding security staff, in particular the local guard force. And I'm going to enter as Exhibit Number 4 a Weekly Update of Topics in Benghazi.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q And I'll give you a few moments to take a look at that document.

A Thank you.

Okay. I've looked at it.

Q Thank you. Now, this document is dated January 29, 2012. And could you remind us again when you left Benghazi?

A I left Benghazi, I believe, February 12, 13. I don't know a specific date.

Q And so this would have been towards the end of your deployment to Benghazi, correct?

A Yes.



Q Okay. Now, I wanted to point you to particular sections within this document. The first one is on the top -- or close to the top of page 2.

A Okay.

Q And it's a section entitled Life Services/Guard Contract. And earlier in the last few hours, you discussed the local guard force contract and mentioned that an interim contract, you believe, had been put in place regarding local guard force. Is that right?

A That's incorrect.

Q Okay. Please correct me.

A The question was was there an interim contract put in place, and my response was that we were in the -- during my time, we were in a position of trying to parcel off the food contract. So I don't know if that would necessarily be considered an interim contract or they were just filling it, but it was still being maintained. And behind the scenes, unbeknownst to that contractor, we were like, okay, we can't do this again. Let's see -- go for another contractor.

Q Now, the first part of that section reads, quote, "received termination of LSC packet from AQM effective January 31, 2012."

Again, could you tell us what LSC stands for?

A I don't know. And just for the record, this is not one of my documents.

Q Okay.

A This was put together by -- these -- if you see these documents in the future, usually these are put together by the IMO in

conjunction with the PO, and it's an overall perspective of post.

So specifically "received termination", that's not something that I recall coming through my office.

Q Okay. Now, in terms of these documents, would you have seen these documents before they were distributed?

A When you say, "these documents," you're talking about just the exhibit as a whole?

Q That's correct. These Weekly Updates.

A I would have access to them. Obviously, I could not recall each one that went out.

Q Okay.

A But the one in front of me looks to be one from Benghazi.

Q Okay. Now, I wanted to actually move backwards to the bottom of page 1 and just ask you if you are familiar with the Security Upgrades section. And I ask this because over the last few hours, you had discussed some requests that you had made initially when you arrived, and they included sandbags, drop arms as well as jersey barriers. Is that right?

A Yes.

Q And, again, what happened to that request that you made when you arrived in Benghazi?

A I did not make that request upon arriving in Benghazi. It actually took me some time to survey the compounds, the task at hand. So I would say within a couple of weeks, definitely within 2 weeks, I'm sure, that I probably came up with these security upgrades.

Q Okay. Now, I want to point out in that section that's called Security Upgrades, the update says that 100 percent of jersey barriers have been delivered and continue to list approved security upgrades such as additional lighting, which is -- I think is one of the other items that you requested.

Now, based on the requests that you made, did you feel that the Department was taking steps to provide those upgrades?

A Yes.

Q In particular, there was a question earlier about any delays regarding these upgrades. Again, those were related to funding. Is that right?

A I don't know if it was related to funding. As I stated earlier, those requests were put in through DS headquarters and [REDACTED]. What happened after that and the discussion of whether or not to be funded or not funded, I don't know.

Q In terms of the document, it says in the third bullet, quote, "received information from RSO that multiple security upgrades have been approved and funded from the action memo that was submitted. Below is the list of approved security upgrades. Benghazi will work with Tripoli on determining how many could be done via EFT and how many would need to be done out of local cash," end quote.

Do you recall, then, that these were the upgrades that you had requested?

A These upgrades listed on this document are a part of the requests I made for security upgrades, so if these are inclusive, these

are part of it.

Q Okay. Mr. [REDACTED], you had mentioned earlier regarding the local guard force contract that you had not been involved in the vetting process for the guards that were there at that time. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Now, did you have any specific complaints about the local guard force while you were there?

A I did not have specific complaints about the local guard force while I was there.

Q Okay. Now, you said earlier that you had left Benghazi on or around February 12, correct?

A Yes.

Q Now, today we had talked about various issues ranging from the local guard force, the Quick Reaction Force as well as various physical security upgrades that you had requested. Once you left Benghazi in February of 2012, did you have any firsthand knowledge about the work of the Special Mission Benghazi after that time?

A I'm pausing because I want to make sure it's certain that I can definitively say that those things were discussed later on. In the interests of being accurate, I'm going to say no, I don't remember discussing those security upgrades and what happened to them after I departed.

Q Okay. And then in terms of the eventual investigation, which was the Benghazi Accountability Review Board, were you aware the Accountability Review Board --

A Yes.

Q -- was convened? Did you think that you had any information that would have been relevant for the ARB?

A No. I -- honestly, I would -- if they wanted to call me, they knew where I was, who I was and the fact that I participated in Benghazi, but they chose not to.

Q Okay. Were you ever asked or ordered to not provide information to the ARB?

A No.

Q Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?

A No.

Q Have you had the opportunity to read or review the ARB's final report or its -- including its recommendations and findings?

A I have reviewed a document about the ARB, and I believe it to be unclassified. I don't remember anything else other than that.

Q Okay. And so you don't -- do not recall the recommendations or the findings of the --

A Correct.

Q Okay.

A I don't recall that.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Mr. [REDACTED], just before we leave the exhibits, I just wanted to direct your attention to the one we haven't yet discussed, which is Exhibit 2, that you had talked about a little earlier. By my count,

and it might not be fully accurate, I saw on the first page in that first paragraph a reference to weapons. It says, quote, "the proliferation of weapons and explosives presents additional hazards." On the second page, I also saw in the second paragraph another reference to easy access to weapons.

It says, as a result of the, quote, "17 Feb uprising, a large segment of the population is now armed but not trained in weapons handling and safety." And then again, which you have discussed about earlier with my colleague, on that last page, a reference to in that second sentence that you had already discussed, quote, "ready access to arms," end quote, by numerous Islamic extremists. So on my count, there was at least three references to problems with easy access to weapons and access to weapons in Benghazi.

Now, it's also our understanding as a committee that the United States had a program -- I don't want to in this setting get into the details of that program -- for identifying, collecting, and destroying weapons in Benghazi. Were you involved in that program at all?

A No.

Q Were you aware of it in any way?

A No.

Q My colleague had asked you a little earlier -- and I'm still on Exhibit 2. I had a couple other questions about it --

A Sure.

Q -- about protests. You talked both with the majority and my colleague on the minority about protests in Benghazi. If you take

a look at the second page, the last paragraph, and there's a reference to in the first sentence just says, one of the -- and I'm quoting here, quote, "one of the constant demonstrations turned violent on January 21 when protesters stormed TNC headquarters in Benghazi," end quote.

Was that the protest, when you -- you discussed a little earlier, to the best of your recollection, was that the same protest that turned violent that you had heard about from the British?

A It may have been the one.

Q Okay. And the reference to constant demonstrations, I think you talked a fair amount, the fact of a demonstration or a protest in Benghazi was a fairly routine event?

A Yes.

Q And obviously among the potential security problems that posed as reflected in this memo is the fact that a protest could potentially turn violent?

A Yes.

Q So the notion of a protest in Benghazi turning violent, would not be a ridiculous notion that should be discussed out of hand by any of your successors?

A A protest in Benghazi turning violent is possible, but I can only account for the time that I was there on the ground.

Q And so it was certainly something that did occur during your time on the ground?

A Yes.

Q And then on the last page, again, just to ask you, one of

the things that is noted in the Look Ahead, that second paragraph, short paragraph, it says, to date there have been no anti-U.S. demonstrations in Benghazi or specific threats against U.S. interests.

What is the significance of that fact from a security perspective?

A From an RSO perspective, the burning of American flags or something directed towards U.S. would have raised perhaps, if it's possible to raise, the threat level about movements within Benghazi. So the significance of this, putting this in there, if there were anti-U.S. demonstrations at Benghazi, then I may have taken the steps to not do movements or things of that nature.

Q So despite some of the things that you mentioned -- that are mentioned, I don't recall whether you said you actually authored this, but you said you were familiar with it, that are mentioned throughout the memo, issues about access to weapons, the existence of numerous Islamic extremists that are noted here, what's also noted is that at least during your time in Benghazi, there were no, quote, "specific threats against U.S. interests." Is that true and accurate?

A Yes.

Q I promise you this is my last question based on this exhibit.

A Which exhibit are we talking about again, Exhibit 2?

Q Just something that I noticed -- yes. Still exhibit 2, that I noticed that I was curious about. And you may or may not be able to help us out a little bit. It's on page 1, 2, 3, 4 under Venue Security, and it talks about Freedom Square, which did come up a little earlier, and the third sentence there, and I'll just quote, it says,



one, quote, "exhibit in the square is comprised of spent munitions used by regime forces against the local population," end quote.

The reference there to regime forces, is that a reference to General Qadhafi's regime?

A Yes.

Q And what was your understanding either based on that exhibit or otherwise as to what had occurred as between the regime and the local population and force being used against them?

A Honestly, I couldn't talk about what happened to them. I wasn't there at the time. The significance of mentioning this, munitions on the ground is obviously an alert to agents who -- agents or Chief of Mission personnel going to this area that those things are available. So it's just pointing that out, but to comment on what was used from the regime, I wasn't there, I don't know.

Q So the hope was that they were actually spent munitions, but I think your caution was that there should be a check to make sure that they were not live munitions as well?

A If an agent were to take the principal officer there for a meeting, you know, we didn't have necessarily EOD dogs or things of that nature, but this would obviously be a red flag for us just as making it a point to show them that this is there, that it's present.

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q Agent [REDACTED], I'm just going to run through a series of allegations that have been made publicly. You understand that the committee's investigating some of these allegations, so I nor the

minority members necessarily adhere to any of these allegations. But I'm just going to run through these allegations and just ask you whether or not you have any evidence to support any of them.

So I'll just kind of go through this hopefully pretty quickly.

A Okay.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton attempted to block military action on the night of the attacks. One congressman speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down, end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi."

Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down" on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it, quote, "four Pinocchios," end quote, its highest award for false claims.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," end quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya

to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A No.

Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily delayed from departing to annex to assist the special mission compound. There have been a number of allegations about the causes and the appropriateness of that delay. The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote, "stand down," that instead there were tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand-down order to CIA personnel?

A No.

Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right decision, do you have any evidence that there was, quote, "a bad or improper" reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA security personnel who departed the annex to assist the special mission compound?

A No.

Q Concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production.

Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents from materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi attacks for political reasons and that he then misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the highest standards of objectivity and non-partisanship," end quote.

Do you have any evidence that the CIA deputy director Mike Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for political reasons?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made a, quote, "intentional misrepresentation" when she spoke on the Sunday

talk shows about the Benghazi attacks.

Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday talk shows?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the President of the United States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander In Chief," end quote, on the night of the attacks and that he was, quote, "missing in action," end quote.

Do you have any evidence to support the allegations that the President was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander In Chief" or, quote, "missing in action" on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at MC Tripoli on the night of the attacks, who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi, were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place" to Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. The Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "there was no stand-down order"

issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A No.

Q It's been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard Buck McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A No.

Q And do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that Pentagon leadership essentially decided not to deploy?

A No.

Mr. Woolfork. Thank you very much. Thank you, Agent [REDACTED].

Mr. [REDACTED]. You're welcome.

Ms. Sawyer. Did you guys have any additional?

Ms. Jackson. No. We're good.

Ms. Sawyer. Then we can go off the record.

[Whereupon, at 1:32 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

## EXHIBIT 1

C05395013

REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE  
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U.S. Special Mission Benghazi  
Regional Security OfficeDiplomatic Security  
Turn Over Notes**1. The Mission**

U.S. Special Mission Benghazi was established in the beginning of 2011 following the start of the revolution to overthrow the Gaddafi Regime. Benghazi fell to the Rebel's against Gaddafi on the 21 February 2011. Benghazi became the temporary headquarters of the National Transitional Council (NTC) from 26 February 2011 to 26 August 2011 until Tripoli was liberated. Although Benghazi is no longer the headquarters of the NTC, it is still a great asset in the transition of Libya as a democracy.

**2. The Mission Compound**

Originally the U.S. Special Mission Benghazi was located in the Tibesti Hotel, until 1 June 2011 when explosives in a car parked in the hotel parking lot were detonated. Following this and due to other security concerns at the time it was thought that U.S. Special Mission Benghazi should find its own compound. The Compound the current Mission sits on consists of 3 Villas. They are respectively referred to as Villa A, Villa B, and Villa C. Villa B is the common area for the mission. It is the location of the chow hall/kitchen as well as a television with the Armed Forces Network Satellite Package. Villa B is also used as a sleeping space for short term TDY'ers to the Mission. Villa B also has a small office space behind it which is used as the primary office space for the mission. Villa C is the primary residence of the mission staff and also has wireless raw internet. Villa C has a small guest house which is currently occupied by five 17<sup>th</sup> of February Militia Soldiers. Villa A is currently unoccupied.

The Compound has five vehicular gates named A1, A2, B, C1, and C2. Gate B is the only gate without a pedestrian entrance and gate A1 is the primary vehicular/pedestrian entrance. All gates are currently blocked with Mission FAVs/LAVs. In the coming months funds should be released to acquire a requested 17 Jersey Barriers to block gates and free up vehicles.

**3. 17<sup>th</sup> of February Militia Soldiers**

In the guest house near Villa C resides five soldiers from the 17<sup>th</sup> of February Rebel Militia's VIP Protection Division. The Militia is recognized by the NTC and has arresting powers. These five men have been trained by the Qatar Military when the revolution began and are armed with AK-47's and Browning Pistols. They have all fought in the revolution and were hand selected to be a part of the Militia's VIP Protection Division. Their names are [redacted] and [redacted] have been with the U.S. Mission since the beginning with [redacted] and [redacted] arriving in October. [redacted] is the commander of the five and speaks decent English. [redacted] speaks the best English out of the five. [redacted] al speaks very little English, while [redacted] and [redacted] do not speak English.



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Because of their training from the Qatar Military these men have a good understanding of the theories behind dignitary protection. They understand the concentric rings of protection as well as advancing a site. Along with providing security for the actual grounds of the compound, these men can also be utilized when going to unfamiliar sites or for their knowledge of Benghazi. They also have direct radio contact with their Militia's Camp and can provide additional assets, such as a QRF within minutes. They are truly a great asset to the Mission and are also extremely professional.

All five men have been issued surefire flashlights, body armor, and IFACs. They were recently given an abbreviated tactical medical course. They have been familiarized before on the M4 Rifle and also have been instructed on REACT duties. There are always at least two on the compound and you will usually see them conducting roving patrols. During the holiday season there camp provided an additional four soldiers and vehicle to patrol the outer parameter of the compound. They were also a significant help in Susan Rice's visit to Benghazi and it could not have been orchestrated without them. These five men do receive a stipend from us of \$27.00 a day. [REDACTED] (IMO) pays them every two weeks in cash.

#### 4. LGF

Please see LGF Turn Over Notes written by ARSO [REDACTED] that I have passed along to ARSO [REDACTED].

#### 5. Vehicles

Currently U.S. Mission Benghazi has seven vehicles, four FAVs and three LAVs. The three LAVs are the 2003 White Land Cruisers. The remaining vehicles (ie Land Cruisers and Mercedes Benz G Class trucks) are FAVs. Besides the FAV Land Cruisers, all of the other vehicles were previously owned by USAID and recently turned over to DS. Tripoli has requested vehicles from U.S. Mission Benghazi; the previous RSO decided that the Mission could afford to give the embassy in Tripoli three vehicles once the mission has received the requested jersey barriers. It was decided these three vehicles would be the 2003 LAV Land Cruisers.

The vehicles are rotated every couple of weeks from actively used to posted on the vehicular gates. At the end of the month a vehicular check should be conducted on each vehicle. A checklist can be found on the TOC computer under the vehicles folder. If maintenance is required of any vehicle the mechanic can be called to come and work on the vehicle. The mechanic's name is [REDACTED] and he can be reached at [REDACTED] (Arabic only). Spare parts for the vehicles are located on the porch in the rear of Villa A.

There are only four vehicle radios so when a vehicle is being switched from posted on a gate to regular use the radio may need to be switched out between cars. Medical Kits will also need to be transferred to a vehicle from another vehicle when it is brought online. Every vehicle should have a full kit of supplies including a tow strap, tools, WD-40, jumper cables, and floor jack. There are also scarves available for covering Long Guns while they are in the vehicle.

#### 6. TOC/Logistics Officer

Please see TOC/Logistics Duties and Responsibilities.

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## 7. Security Upgrades

Please see Security Upgrades Attachment.

## 8. Mission ID Badges

Mission ID Badges are currently created on the raw internet computer in the general office space. There are instructions next to the computer on how to create badges.

## 9. Evacuation/HLZ

Recently we had taken a look at the current Evacuation plan for the mission and found it was extremely outdated. We no longer have any DOD assets available to us. The current plan is still in the process of being drawn up, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] If there was not enough room on the aircraft DS Personnel would motorcade east [REDACTED] and reassess the situation as they moved.

We currently have a designated HLZ and survey for it. The survey was completed by ARSO [REDACTED] and was looked over by Marine Corps Aviators. They felt the survey was well put together and only need the addition of a distance scale to the imagery. This has not been completed and once it is completed the Survey can be sent off to the following people: [REDACTED], RSO Tripoli, and [REDACTED] (Branch Chief, SPC/EP).

A suggestion was made in a recent EAC that we should establish an MOU with the U.S. Navy Base in Souda Bay, Crete for air assets if required in an Evacuation Scenario.

## 10. Communications

Radio usage is also touched upon in the TOC/Logistics Officer's Duties and Responsibilities Packet, but unfortunately I must report to you that we are currently having difficulty with our Agent Radios.

[REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]

## 11. Contact Info

Over your tenure at the mission if anything comes up at all that I may be able to assist you with please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Below is my current contact information:

[REDACTED]  
 Work Blackberry [REDACTED]  
 Cell Phone [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]@state.gov  
 [REDACTED]@gmail.com

## EXHIBIT 2

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**Benghazi: Security Environment & Threat Assessment****Summary:**

The security environment in Benghazi can be described as semi-permissive. Libya remains a high threat area with skirmishes taking place between militias and opportunists throughout the country. Benghazi is controlled by the Government of Libya, but lacks basic services and has no centralized security structure. The proliferation of weapons and explosives presents additional hazards. Movement in and around the city is feasible with basic precautions. Due to the fluid security environment and limited resources at Post, USG personnel should be prepared for a drawdown and/or an evacuation on short notice.

**Background:**

On April 5, 2011, the Office of U.S. Envoy commenced operations in Benghazi, Libya. Current staffing includes the Principal Officer, IMO, two DS agents, and one LES. Generally, Transitional National Council (TNC) officials and Benghazi residents support the humanitarian efforts being carried out by the international community. To date, there have been no specific threats or attacks against U.S. Mission staff. There is no history of suicide bombings or complex attacks in Benghazi. Nevertheless, Qadhafi loyalists and sympathizers maintain a low profile presence in Benghazi and are capable of carrying out attacks; for example, loyalists set off improvised explosive devices (IEDs) in Freedom Square on May 3, 2011, and in front of the Tibesti Hotel on June 1, 2011. There also were clashes between Qadhafi loyalists and TNC security forces on July 31, 2011.

On October 20, 2011 - Qadhafi was killed.

**Security Environment:**

According to TNC security officials, a number of loyalist attacks have been thwarted in recent months including several vehicle-borne IEDs (VBEIDs) targeting hotels and TNC facilities. These VBEIDs were reportedly assembled in western Libya. To date, none of these VBEIDs have detonated. Theories for failed execution include lack of bomb-making skills; IEDs are designed to intimidate as opposed to kill or injure; or, the persons ordered to carry out the attacks refuse to do so. Unlike the crude IED used to carry out the June 1<sup>st</sup> bombing at the Tibesti hotel, recently seized VBEIDs contain a significant amount of explosives (up to 40 kilos of semtex) with remote detonation via cell phone. Note: semtex is readily available in Libya and was used by the Libyan intelligence service in the Pan Am 103 bombing.

Once Qadhafi's forces were driven out of Benghazi in March 2011, more than 40 independent "security" units or militias took control of the city. Checkpoints were established and vehicles

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and passengers are subject to search. Armed militia members lack training and are unfamiliar with basic weapons safety. The number of checkpoints increases after dark. During a checkpoint altercation between a group of French private security contractors and local militia members, a contractor was shot in the back while the remaining contractors were arrested and later deported after spending five days in custody. To mitigate problems associated with checkpoints, DS agents carry on their person a letter issued by the TNC (in English and Arabic). The letter states that U.S. security personnel are present at the request of the TNC and are authorized to carry firearms. Additionally, DS agents carry TNC-issued ID cards. Finally, the Mission has official vehicle placards with the TNC seal for easy identification.

As a result of the "17 Feb" uprising, a large segment of the population is now armed but not trained in weapons handling and safety. This lack of training poses a significant risk and unexplained gunfire is common in Benghazi. In many cases, the gunfire is considered celebratory and should be expected during rallies, weddings, or the announcement of significant political or military news. Weapons include pistols, rifles, medium and heavy machine guns, and dynamite (commonly used for fishing). Mission personnel should be prepared for "celebratory" fire and take cover as necessary. Other explanations for gunfire include: crime-related violence and self-defense; rebel weapons training centers; and police action against criminals and/or regime loyalists.

Dynamite is commonly used for fishing in Libya and is often used as a celebratory expression. It has also been used as a weapon. The June 1, 2011 bombing at the Tibesti Hotel was reportedly carried out using dynamite or a hand grenade placed underneath or inside a parked car. The explosion ignited the fuel tank amplifying the blast effects. Another bombing occurred near the courthouse at Freedom Square on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. At least two people were wounded in the attack. Freedom Square remains the symbol of the rebel movement and many believe the attack was conducted by loyalist forces.

On January 17, 2012, the PO and RSO met with a former Preventive Security officer who mentioned that petty crime and car-jacking incidents are on the rise in the greater Benghazi area. Evidently, the Egyptian black market has a strong desire (paying top money) for 4x4 vehicles with an emphasis on the common Toyota Hilux. A car-jacking of a local took place within the Fwayhat District (the same district as Mission Benghazi) on January 22, 2012. Details of the incident are being worked by the RSO. During a meeting in February, Benghazi's new police chief confirmed that crime remains a problem and noted that approximately 140 serious criminals freed during the revolution remain at large with access to weapons.

One of the constant demonstrations turned violent on January 21 when protestors stormed TNC Headquarters in Benghazi. Contacts in Benghazi and Tripoli told us that the protests were likely a culmination of popular frustration with the Council's lack of transparency and lack of progress on Libya's most important issues. They explained that the protestors – and those who empathize with them – were upset by the lack of support for the war wounded and families of martyrs,

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limited public input in the election law, and the TNC's overall unresponsiveness to the Libyan "street." As an example of the last point, contacts noted the demands of Benghazi's Shajara Square protestors calling for greater transparency and accountability from both Benghazi's TNC members, as well as its local council – a sentiment shared by frequent protests in Tripoli's Algeria Square and in Misrata. Some speculated that a January 19 attack against TNC Vice Chair Ghoga (an incident in which he was slapped and roughed up by university students after he insisted on attending an event at which he was not welcome) may have emboldened the protestors to use violence in breaching the TNC headquarters.

**Movement Security:**

Mission staff is required to travel in armored vehicles with DS escort. All motorcade movements are low-profile: no more than two vehicles traveling together; no blocking or aggressive maneuvering; move with the flow of traffic; observe traffic laws; no counter flow movements; weapons and personal protective equipment remains concealed. Checkpoints are common throughout the city and are potential areas of concern. The following procedures should be followed:

- Coordinate movement/routes with RSO before departure
- Slow down as you approach; be prepared to come to a full stop
- Display vehicle placards; be prepared to show ID
- Keep doors closed and locked
- Wait for clearance before moving through checkpoint
- Do not take photos or videos
- Avoid travel at night to the extent possible

Traffic laws are rarely enforced and defensive driving is essential. All passengers (including AIC) should wear seatbelts. Numerous roundabouts, high-speed merges, pedestrians, and intersections require constant vigilance. In the event of an accident, crowds may gather. Drivers should carry mobile and sat phones, and pre-identify safe havens and competent medical facilities along the route of travel.

**Residential Security:**

The mission is located on a residential compound in the western Fwayhat district. The French, UK, and UN delegations are in close proximity. Primary HLZ and medical facility are less than 5 minutes away. Existing footprint is a combination of three compounds (Villa A, Villa B and Villa C) approx. 13 acres.. Villa A is scheduled to be returned to its owner March 10. Compound has five vehicle/pedestrian access points – north and south. Primary access point is the north gate. All gates are blocked by using armored vehicles. TNC armed guards and

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unarmed contracted LGF provide perimeter security; DS agents are responsible for internal defense.

All three compounds are connected via internal access points and provide office and bed space for up to 24 persons. Compounds are surrounded by a perimeter wall and all residential and office buildings have window grills. Structures are solid masonry with some setback. Each structure has a designated safe haven stocked with MREs/bottled water. The safe havens are unhardened and do not have doors capable of withstanding even a simple assault. All of the vehicle/pedestrian access points are blocked off; visitors and deliveries are channeled to one screening area (see Mission Access Control policy for more details).

Technical security equipment has been installed and includes perimeter cameras, monitors, walk through metal detectors (WMD) and IDNS. Cameras are controlled and monitored via the RSO TOC. Physical security upgrades include the placement of "jersey barriers" at the newly identified main access control point Charlie One. RSO has requested IRM and ESOs to return to Mission Benghazi to take down security equipment in Villa A and redeploy these assets. As of this date ESO Cairo plan to come out on February 26, 2012.

RSO staffing has been approved by U/S Kennedy: five DS personnel (agents and Security Protective Specialists). Due to the limited number of staff, Villa C is the designated residence for all personnel. Currently only two of the five designated DS positions are filled. This staffing level is insufficient to provide security to other USG personnel under current threat conditions.

#### Venue Security:

**TNC Facilities:** Most lack setback and/or concentric rings of security. Armed guards maintain static positions; vehicle gates are normally left unsecure. TNC senior officials and facilities remain a likely target for Qadhafi loyalists.

**Freedom Square:** The square is a symbol of the revolution and a desirable venue for visiting VIPs. Protective security can be arranged through the TNC. Large crowds can be expected and should be factored in during emergency response planning. One "exhibit" in the square is comprised of spent munitions used by regime forces against the local population. A sweep of the munitions is recommended prior to a VIP visit. Several narrow streets surround the square and should be avoided.

**Hotels:** Main hotels include the Al-Fadeel, Tibesti, and Ouzo. TNC and international delegations frequently conduct business at these hotels. Hotels lack setback and access control/physical security is inconsistent. There is a general threat against hotels and TNC buildings. Security forces rendered safe a VBIED at the Tibesti on July 4, 2011, and Qadhafi loyalists may be planning similar attacks.

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January 12, 2012, a female political activist was beaten in Benghazi: political activist [REDACTED] was assaulted and beaten by two unknown assailants as she left Al-Fadhel Hotel in Benghazi where she was on business. [REDACTED] was present at Maydan Al Shajara in Benghazi on January 18 where she criticized the TNC for ignoring the demands of "Correcting the Revolution Movement" held in Freedom Square to protest against the current situation.

U.S. Mission Benghazi's responsibilities include travel to other parts of eastern Libya. Numerous Islamic extremists, including dozens with experience fighting coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, are in the area and have ready access to arms. Islamic groups have recently carried out small arms and RPG attacks against both the police station and jail in Derna. The area around Kufra, in southern Libya, is unstable and lawless as competing militias vie for control of the cross-border smuggling routes.

Look Ahead:

As illustrated by recent violent protests and the July 28, 2011, assassination of TNC General Yunus, the security environment remains fragile. More than 40 independent militias operate in and around Benghazi and tribal rivalries persist. On July 31, a group of Qadhafi loyalists barricaded themselves inside a building less than a mile from the U.S. Mission in Benghazi. Members of the 17 Feb Martyrs Brigade surrounded the building and a gun battle ensued. Several loyalists were killed or injured. TNC crackdowns on non-sanctioned militias can be expected.

To date, there have been no anti-U.S. demonstrations in Benghazi or specific threats against U.S. interests.

There are reports of Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) smuggling weapons and explosives out of Libya to neighboring countries. AQIM and other transnational terrorist groups could try to take advantage of a deteriorating security environment in Benghazi or a post-Qadhafi power vacuum in Tripoli.

February 17 marks the one-year anniversary of the revolution. Large demonstrations are expected.

Questions should be directed to RSO [REDACTED]. As of Feb. 5, please contact RSO [REDACTED] via the Benghazi RSO TOC [REDACTED]. Benghazi TOC Mobile [REDACTED].

## EXHIBIT 3

C05410062

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 28, 2012 5:02 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] DS-IP-NEA  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] Benghazi RSO; DS Command Center; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]@gmail.com;  
**Subject:** Benghazi RSO SITREP for 28 January 2012

ALCON:

Below is the Benghazi RSO SITREP as of 1200 hrs (ZULU+2) on 28 January:

Last 24 Hours

- Teams made movements to two venues yesterday.

Next 24 Hours

- Teams plan to make three movements today.
- Information Management Officer [REDACTED] arrives tonight at 1800 hrs via the Support Flight from Souda Bay.
- Public Affairs Officer [REDACTED] arrives tonight at 2100 hrs via the Support Flight from Souda Bay.
- All movements for tomorrow are TBD.

NUMBER OF USG PERSONNEL ON THE GROUND (05)

- PO – 1 of 1
- RSO – 3 of 5
- IMO/MO – 1 of 1

SECURITY/ENVIRONMENT

- Occasional celebratory small arms, machine gun, and artillery fire as well as explosions can be heard throughout Benghazi.
- Two TNC assets assigned to aid in protecting the U.S. Mission compound have permanently left their positions. This brings the current number of TNC assets available for compound protection to three from five. Information gathered from the TNC commander indicates their departure was due to dissatisfaction with their stipend, their lack of payment by the new GoL, and the need to find work in the local economy. No hostility was reported between the two TNC assets who left and the U.S. Mission. The relationship with TNC assets remains positive.
- Roving TNC patrols around the perimeter of the compound have terminated. Information gathered from the TNC commander indicates their departure was due to the same reasons listed above.
- RSO staff is taking steps to fill in security gaps left by the departing TNC assets.

TRANSPORTATION

- Benina International Airport is open and commercial flights are operating as normal.
- The support flight out of Souda Bay operating as normal.
- Passport control and baggage screening are in place for commercial flights. Both inbound and outbound bags are being screened.



C05410062

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- Route from U.S. Mission compound to airport is open with minimal congestion and militia checkpoints.
- Traffic conditions in Benghazi remain hazardous due to the lack of enforcement on regulations and safety.

COMMUNICATIONS

- Communication checks were performed with DSCC today at 1129 hrs.

V/R

--

Assistant Regional Security Officer

U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

Unsecure Main: +1-240-553-9328

Unsecure Mobile: (If Local: )

OpenNet: @state.gov

ClassNet: @state.sgov.gov

\*\*\* THIS E-MAIL IS UNCLASSIFIED BASED ON THE DEFINITIONS PROVIDED IN E.O. 13526\*\*\*

## EXHIBIT 4

C05390904

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
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## Weekly Update of Topics in Benghazi

January 29, 2012

*General Items*

- The generator repairs to Villa B appear to be successful as we haven't lost power for any long length of time.
- There were multiple security lights not working around compound and we have worked with a local contractor to repair these lights.
- , the owner of Villa B, lease situation:
  - We had a meeting with the notary who handled the original leases. He reviewed the documents and has informed us that in his opinion has no basis to believe that the lease is null and void. We asked about an official legal opinion and he recommended a lawyer to use.
  - We have submitted the lawyer's information to OBO for approval. , phone no. , Omar Almkhtar Stree, Benghazi, Libya.
  - OBO has come back and requested the CV and 2-3 additional lawyers and their CVs to do comparisons. We are in the process of getting these additional lawyers' information. Once we have all the information we will submit it to OBO.
- Radio equipment was found in Tripoli that would be used to replace the current emergency E&E/EAC radio network that DS put in place during the initial push. We had it scheduled to be on the Jan 28<sup>th</sup> support flight but due to issues with the flight this is in a holding pattern.

*Decommissioning of Villa A*

- All items have been removed from inside and around the outside of the Villa.
- Work left to be done on Villa A:
  - ESO Cairo to move cameras and remove the SelecTone from Villa A. Scheduled Feb 26<sup>th</sup>.
  - Rebuilding of wall between Villa A and Villa B. *Getting a price estimate.*
  - Comprehensive walk thru to make list of items to be fixed/repaired.
  - Determine if there is a need to remove the window grills or leave in place.
  - Fixing of any damage found.

*RSO Presence*

- Waiting on status of DS memo to facilitate RSO assignments to Benghazi (longer tours & directed assignments).

*Security Upgrades*

- 100% of jersey barriers have been delivered and installed.
- Escape hatch estimate was received verbally but not written. We have requested the written estimate and will submit as soon as we get it.
- Received information from RSO that multiple security upgrades have been approved and funded from the action memo that was submitted. Below is the list of approved security upgrades. Benghazi will work with Tripoli on determining how many could be done via EFT and how many would need to be done out of local cash.
  - (SBU) The acquisition of up to 500 sand bags to harden existing structures and provide defensive points on the two compounds (B and C) currently occupied by COM personnel. Estimated cost for sandbags is \$1000.
  - (SBU) Additional lights inside the compound costing an average of \$150 per light including installation. Several areas of the currently-occupied compound are unlit at night, creating large gaps in security coverage. RSO recommends 25 lights be installed for a total estimated cost of \$3,750.
  - (SBU) Villa B (office) door and Villa C (residential) front and back doors need structural reinforcement. The Villa C designated "safe haven" room (currently a utility closet) requires the addition of a security door. Estimated cost is \$1600.

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- o (SBU) Two locally constructed vehicle drop arms are requested for the primary entrance: one for access and one for the egress lane. The British mission had two robust drop arms made at \$5000 each. Therefore, cost for both drop arms should be about \$10,000.

#### Life Services/Guard Contract

- Received termination of LSC packet from AQM effective January 31, 2012.
- The local guards have been informed that we will be terminating the contract with [REDACTED], but should remain on the job as they will get picked up under the new contract.
- AC45 Tripoli POC is expected to be out here the night of the 29<sup>th</sup> to handle the transition.
  - o Guard service transition is expected to only take a day or two. My understanding is that the contracts are already prepared and they just need to reach out to each guard.
  - o The food service transition will take a few days and we have informed them that we are ok with this. The main chef for [REDACTED] that is normally on compound will be on leave starting the 29<sup>th</sup> through the end of the contract and [REDACTED] is supposed to be providing food directly from his hotel.

#### LES Position

- She has been paid through January 19<sup>th</sup>. Up to what date do I pay her out of local funds?

#### Financial

- Our current amounts are the following:
  - o 39,760 Euros
  - o 1,711 USD
  - o 10,108 LYD
- \$4,739 remains in the DS provided TNC fund cite. DS should plan to replenish this fund cite or issue a new fund cite around February 13, 2012.
- Funds for the Globe Com VOIP phones are set to expire on February 5<sup>th</sup>. NEA would need to purchase additional time to maintain service. I do not know if service would be interrupted completely or just for outside the 6 "free" area codes.
- If the contractors for the various security will only take cash payments and not EFT will we be able to get a cash infusion in local currency similar to what Tripoli did a week or two ago?

#### Look Ahead

- [REDACTED] (PO) will be arriving on January 30<sup>th</sup>.
- [REDACTED] (NEA/EX) arrives on January 30<sup>th</sup> and departs for Tripoli on January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- [REDACTED] (MO/IMO) will be departing post on January 31<sup>st</sup>.
- [REDACTED] (PO) will be departing post on February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- [REDACTED] (RSO) and [REDACTED] (A/RSO) will be arriving on February 1<sup>st</sup>.
- [REDACTED] (A/RSO) will be departing post on February 5<sup>th</sup>.
- [REDACTED] (RSO) and [REDACTED] (A/RSO) will be departing post on February 12<sup>th</sup>.
- ESO Carri arriving February 26<sup>th</sup>.

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.



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# **INTERVIEW OF PRINCIPAL OFFICER #2**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 13, 2015

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## APPEARANCES

### FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

DANA CHIPMAN, *Chief Counsel*  
SHARON JACKSON, *Deputy Chief Counsel*  
CARLTON DAVIS, *Counsel*  
SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*  
MARK GRIDER, *Deputy General Counsel*  
KIM BETZ, *Member Outreach Liaison and Counsel*  
HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*  
PETER KENNY, *Minority Senior Counsel*  
RONAK DESAI, *Minority Counsel*

### FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*

Ms. Clarke. Good morning. This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED] conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation -- and we appreciate you coming here today -- the committee's investigation into the attacks on U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and related matters pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Could you please state your name for the record?

Ms. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED].

Ms. Clarke. And, again, the committee appreciates you coming here today. My name is Sheria Clarke. I'm with the committee's majority staff. And we'll just take a moment to go around the room. I think you may have met everyone, but we'll just have everyone put their name on the record. We'll start with my colleague to the right.

Ms. Jackson. Sharon Jackson with the majority staff.

Mr. Desai. Ronak Desai with the minority staff.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority staff.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority.

Mr. Davis. Carlton Davis. I work for Mr. Gowdy.

Mr. Chipman. I'm Dana Chipman with the majority staff.

Mr. Grider. Mark Grider, majority staff.

Ms. Betz. Kim Betz, majority staff.

Mr. Evers. Austin Evers, State Department.

Ms. Clarke. Thank you.

Before we begin the questions I'd like to go over some of the ground rules and explain how the interview will proceed. The way the questions proceed is that a member from the majority will ask questions for up to an hour, then the minority will have an opportunity to ask questions for an equal period of time as they choose. We will firmly adhere to the 1-hour time limit for each side, so at the end of the first hour of questioning we will take a break if you would like, and then the minority, if they choose, will begin their questions.

Questions may only be asked by a member of the committee or a designated staff member, and we will rotate back and forth until we are out of questions, and the interview will end at that time.

Unlike the testimony or a deposition in Federal Court, the committee format is not bound by the rules of evidence. The witness or their counsel may raise objections for privilege subject to review by the chairman of the committee. If these objections can't be resolved in the interview the witness can be required to return.

Members and staff of the committee, however, are not permitted to raise objections when the other side is asking questions, and this has not been an issue we've encountered in the past, but I just wanted you to be aware of the process.

This session is to begin in an unclassified setting. If there are any questions that I ask you or that someone else asks you that you believe calls for a classified answer we can return to that in a classified setting.

You're welcome to confer with counsel at any time throughout the



interview. If something needs to be clarified, just make that known to us, we can rephrase the question. If it's a compound question and you would like for us to break it down we're happy to do that for you. And if you need to discuss anything with your counsel we will go off the record and you can have an opportunity to do that.

Whenever you would like to take a break we're happy to take a break when it's convenient for you. Like I said before, we usually go in about an hour round. If you want to take a break before then we're happy to do that. If you need anything, a glass of water, tea, coffee during your questioning, just let us know and we will get those for you. We want to make this as comfortable for you as possible.

As you can see, there is an official reporter, and she's taking down everything that you and I say and that anyone in the room says. We ask that you give verbal responses to questions, yes and no, as opposed to nodding your head or shaking your head. I'll ask the reporter to feel free to jump in if she notices that there are not verbal responses.

The other thing that we'll make sure we try to do is not talk over each other, so I'll finish asking a question and allow you to finish answering a question before I pose the next question and the minority staff will do the same.

We want you to answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner possible, so we'll take our time and repeat or clarify those questions if necessary. If you have any questions or if you do not understand any of our questions, again, please let us know, we'll

be happy to clarify or repeat them for you.

If you don't know the answer to a question or do not remember it's best not to guess. Just give us your best recollection, and if there are things you don't know or can't remember just say so, and please inform us of who, to the best of your knowledge, may be able to answer those questions.

You are required to answer questions from Congress truthfully. Do you understand that?

Ms. [REDACTED] I do.

Ms. Clarke. And this also applies to questions posed by congressional staff in interviews. Do you also understand that?

Ms. [REDACTED]. I do.

Ms. Clarke. Witnesses that knowingly provide false testimony could be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury or for making false statements. Do you understand that?

Ms. [REDACTED]. I do.

Ms. Clarke. Is there anything, any reason that you are unable to provide truthful answers today?

Ms. [REDACTED]. No.

Ms. Clarke. Great.

That's the end of my preamble. Is there anything that the minority would like to add?

Mr. Kenny. I think we would just like to take the opportunity to thank the witness for appearing here today. That's all.

Ms. Clarke. The clock now reads 10:06, and we'll start with the

first hour of questions.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], can you tell us just a little bit about your background, when you started with the State Department?

A I started with the State Department 12 years ago this week, and I've been posted -- I've been mostly overseas during the last 12 years.

Q Okay. Can you just give us an idea of the various assignments that you've had?

A Certainly, certainly. I began in Beirut, Lebanon, and then I went to East Jerusalem. From there I went to Sudan, then to France, then to Pakistan, and then to Libya.

Q Okay. And what roles did you serve in those various assignments?

A I was a cultural attache in Jerusalem; consular in Beirut; political in Sudan; PAO, public affairs officer, in France; principal officer in Benghazi; and also PAO in Lahore, Pakistan.

Q For the record, what does PAO stand for?

A Public affairs officer.

Q Okay. So you mentioned that you served as the principal officer in Benghazi. Tell us about how you became the principal officer. Were you recruited or did you volunteer for that position?

A I was asked to go.

Q Okay. And who asked you to go?

A Chris Stevens.

Q Okay. About how far in advance were you asked to go to Benghazi? How long before you actually arrived there?

A I think it was about maybe 6 weeks or so.

Q Okay. Do you know why you in particular were asked to go?

A I think because Chris thought I was qualified.

Q Okay. What were some of the qualifications that you had?

A Well, he and I had worked together quite a bit over the past several years, so we had a good working relationship. I speak Arabic. I had worked in the Middle East quite a bit.

Q Okay. Other than him asking you to go, did you all have any discussions about Benghazi, the security situation there or the expectations for what your role would be there?

A We certainly talked about what I should be doing out there as the principal officer, which is to conduct diplomacy in a very important part of the country, in a post-revolutionary, very transitional period. As a principal officer I would make contacts, be a resource for people who wanted to talk about American policy, and to also do assessments of the economic situation, for example oil.

Q You mentioned that one of your roles as principal officer was to make contacts.

A Uh-huh.

Q Did you also -- prior to going there, were there individuals that you were told to contact?

A We all had -- there were one or two principal officers prior

to me, I believe. We had a contact list, as it were, just phone numbers and emails, who does what.

Q Okay. And do you recall who the principal officer was prior to you?

A Yes, I do. It was [REDACTED]. I'm not going to say his last name because I can't remember it.

Q Does [REDACTED] sound familiar?

A [REDACTED] sounds familiar.

Q All right. And when did you arrive in Benghazi, and how long were you there?

A I arrived in early March, and I left in mid-June.

Q Did you have any overlap with Mr. [REDACTED]?

A We did not have physical overlap. I did, however, speak to him on the phone numerous times, and we had a lot of email exchanges.

Q Was that just regarding what he was doing in Benghazi and what he thought you might want to undertake?

A That's right.

Q Did you have any type of official changeover document?

A No, and there normally is not one in an embassy.

Q Okay. How do principal officers usually inform the incoming principal officer? Is it just through email and phone conversations?

A It's always sort of a -- it's not an official, formal process. It never is.

Q Okay. Prior to going to Benghazi had you received FACT

training?

A I had.

Q Was that required to go to Benghazi or had you received it previously?

A I had had it two or three times previously.

Q Can you describe what is the purpose of the FACT training?

A Well, it's defensive driving, countersurveillance, gun familiarity.

Q Okay. Now, as the principal officer are you given a gun or is that just for your familiarity in instances where you --

A It's just for familiarity.

Q Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi were there other foreign service officers present?

A There were other official Americans but not foreign service.

Q Okay. And who were those Americans?

A There was a communications management person and then there were diplomatic security.

Q Is that the same as an IMO management?

A Yes.

Q Can you describe just briefly what their role is?

A To make sure that the communications, i.e., Internet, computers, things like that, are working, to do procurement for whatever we might need on the compound, whether that be food or electricity or construction, kind of general services basically.

Q Are they involved in procuring contracts for guard services?

A Yes, they can be.

Q And that just depends on --

A I mean, it depends on the situation.

Q So you mentioned that there was DS personnel there as well. Do you recall how many were present when you arrived?

A Three, I believe.

Q And did that number change while you were there?

A It did change.

Q Did it increase or decrease?

A It decreased at times and increased at times.

Q What was the most that you had there while you were there?

A The most that I had would be three DS and then augmented by three or four from the SST in Tripoli.

Q Okay. And then what was the least number that you had?

A One.

Q Were you aware of other U.S. security personnel present in Benghazi during your time?

A What do you mean by security personnel?

Q Well, were you aware of other U.S. presence in Benghazi?

A Certainly.

Q What about other Western countries or entities?

A Yeah, absolutely.

Q What were some of the countries that were there during your

time?

A Just Western or in general?

Q Western.

A France, Britain, Norway, Sweden, Italy -- well, the U.N. There may have been a few more, but that's what I recall the most. Turkey.

Q And as principal officer, would one of your roles also have been to have contact with those Western entities and develop relationships with them?

A Yes.

Q And did you develop relationships with them?

A Yes.

Q So we mentioned the FACT training. Do you know if this was a requirement to go to Benghazi?

A I don't know. I don't know if it was. I don't think I was required to take it because I had already taken it. I don't know if it was a requirement for others.

Q So if you've taken it before, do you have to take the training? If it's a requirement at a post that you're going and you've already taken it, does that training, in essence, expire where if you haven't taken it in a certain number of years?

A Yes, I think it's in 5 years.

Q Okay. And do you know whether it was a requirement -- became a requirement any time while you were there that you had to take FACT training?



A Me as principal officer or others?

Q You as principal officer or others that arrived.

A Well, I had already had it, and most diplomatic security have had it. There was a time when you wouldn't stay in country more than 30 days had you not had high-threat training.

Q Now, did you take FACT training previously because you served in other high-threat posts?

A That's right.

Q So just generally what was your understanding of the security situation in Benghazi before you arrived?

A My understanding of the security situation? I hadn't been to Benghazi before, so I didn't really know.

Q Well, as far as your discussions with Mr. [REDACTED] or with Ambassador Stevens, what kind of pictures did they lay out for you?

A I knew that we were going to a fortified compound and that I would be living there with the other U.S. personnel, as well as a small contingent of 17th February Brigade. And that's pretty much what I knew.

Q Okay. Once you arrived, what about actual security incidents and the number of incidents that were happening, were you aware of those prior to coming to Benghazi?

A Which ones?

Q Any type of security incident, whether it was directed at Western entities or just incidents in general in Benghazi.

A Before I came?

Q Yes.

A No, I was not.

Q Okay. What about once you arrived there, did you become aware of security incidents?

A I think you have to define what you mean by security incidents.

Q Well, examples of stops at security checkpoints that were unexpected or --

A Well, it was a constantly changing, evolving situation, kind of unpredictable, so I'm not sure. I mean, I think you would have to ask me about specific security incidents.

Q Okay, we'll get into those a little more later on.

A Okay.

Q You mentioned as the principal officer you would gather information about economic and political happenings in Benghazi. What was your understanding of the U.S. interests in Benghazi?

A Well, one of the principal things that we were looking at, at that time, in the political realm was the idea that the east was going to try to form perhaps a federalist union, and U.S. policy interest was that Libya remain a united country. Libya is a major oil-producing country, I think as we all know, so to get an assessment of how functioning that oil economy was and how we might be able to help so that they would have, you know, sustainable, basically self-sustaining funds.

Q Did you know why there was an interest in the east to form

a federal union?

A They felt disenfranchised.

Q From?

A From Tripolitania, which is the west.

Q Do you know the basis for that disenfranchisement?

A It's historic. It goes back to the Italian occupation.

Q And you said there was a U.S. interest -- well, that Libya is an oil country.

A Uh-huh.

Q Is the oil centered in a particular area of Libya?

A Most of the oil reserves are in the east, and there are some in the south.

Q As the principal officer did you visit areas outside Benghazi as well as make contacts within Benghazi?

A I did.

Q What are some of the areas that you visited?

A I went to Tobruk, I went to Derna, I went to Misrata, and I went to -- there are quite a few, Ajdabiya, mostly towns along the Mediterranean coast.

Q And are these all further east of Benghazi?

A Let's see, Ajdabiya is a little bit south, and the rest are further east.

Q Okay. What prompted you to go to these areas?

A It's part of any principal officer's or any reporting officer's job, and that was my area of responsibility.

Q Okay. So when you undertook your movements to, whether inside -- let's discuss your movements inside Benghazi. What was the security profile like for you as the principal officer?

A I would go with a -- in a fully armored vehicle with a driver and generally an RSO.

Q Now, was the driver locally employed staff?

A That's right.

Q Was that always the case or did that develop during your time there?

A The drivers were always local.

Q Okay. Were there instances where the DS agents would serve as drivers?

A Yes, there was, there were.

Q Okay. You mentioned before that at one point there was only one DS agent.

A Uh-huh.

Q In those instances, did you conduct movements?

A We did.

Q And how were those movements structured?

A [REDACTED] would come along. And I can't recall exactly specific movements, but I was always with -- [REDACTED] was mostly with me.

Q Okay. And so who would remain at the compound?

A The communicators and the local guard force.

Q Okay. Is the local guard force the Blue Mountain Group?

A That's right.

Q Now, at some point -- you said that you arrived in early March. When you arrived at that time was the Blue Mountain Group the local guard force at that time?

A Yes.

Q And had they recently taken over that position?

A I'm not sure.

Q Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi, can you describe the compound and the villas that were in the compound?

A Sure. There was the residential villa and there was the -- what we called -- it was an old villa that was used as office space, and there was a villa that was guest rooms and a cafeteria.

Q And did you understand that recently before your arrival that there had been an additional villa that was a part of the compound?

A Yes, yes.

Q And that that villa had been essentially returned and was no longer being used?

A That's right.

Q So once -- when you arrived, all of the U.S. interests in that villa had completed and everything had been moved out and had been turned over?

A As far as I know.

Q Okay. You weren't involved in that process?

A No, I was not.

Q Were you involved in the process of requesting upgrades for the villa, either villa, the two villas that you described?

A I was certainly aware of them when the RSOs would make that recommendation for upgrades.

Q Okay. What were some of those recommendations?

A We requested concertina wire on the perimeter walls and to increase the height of the perimeter walls. We also requested resources for sandbags and Jersey barriers.

Q And did you all receive those resources?

A We did.

Q Were there any resources that were requested that were delayed and had not arrived prior to you departing?

A No. I think we wanted more cars, just to have a bigger fleet of cars, and those were having import problems into Libya, which is typical.

Q Was there ever a discussion about possibly erecting a fence within the compound?

A Yes, there was.

Q Did that actually happen?

A Partially.

Q Okay.

A It was partially constructed.

Q Why wasn't it completed?

A I believe we did not have the money at that time to finish it.

Q Okay. Now, were the concertina wires introduced in lieu of that construction or both of those items were requested?

A Both of those items were requested.

Q Are you aware of the physical security requirements that a post needs to meet?

A You mean OBO requirements?

Q Yes.

A I know they exist. I don't know what they are.

Q Did you have an understanding of whether or not the villas in the Benghazi compound met those requirements?

A Again, I don't know what the requirements are.

Q Okay. Did you ever have a discussion with the RSO about the requirements and whether he felt that they met those requirements?

A Not about OBO standards, no, I don't remember that.

Q Let's back up for just a moment. Can you kind of describe the structure of the U.S. personnel. As the principal officer are you a superior to the RSO? Or how does that relationship work?

A As the principal officer you are overall responsible for the mission. RSOs report to Diplomatic Security. We have different kind of reporting chains of command. But essentially, I was their -- I don't want to say superior, but I was higher in rank.

Q Okay. When it came to security issues, did you have the authority to veto their decisions about them?

A No, I did not.

Q Okay. And what was your relationship with Tripoli? Can you describe that relationship?

A You mean reporting-wise?

Q Yes.

A I reported -- my supervisors would be the DCM, which is the deputy chief of mission, and then the Ambassador.

Q Okay. Who was the DCM during your time there?

A [REDACTED].

Q Thank you for pronouncing her name.

Did you interact at all with the Tripoli RSO?

A [REDACTED], [REDACTED], yes. He came out to Benghazi once or twice when I was there, but mostly the relationship with him was conducted by our RSOs.

Q Okay. And do you know what prompted his trips to Benghazi?

A He came just out of, you know, just to come see what the compound looked like and just to do a security assessment. That was his responsibility too. He was the overall country RSO.

Q Okay. During his visits did you ever share any concerns with him about the security?

A I didn't really have concerns. We talked about the constant request for reaching the cap of recommended diplomatic security agents. But generally in questions of security I defer to the experts.

Q So you mentioned [REDACTED] name. Is that [REDACTED]?

A That's right.

Q Was he the agent that was there, he was the only agent on the ground for a period of time?

A Yes.



Q Do you recall about when that was?

A Actually, I'm sorry, I don't. I don't recall exactly when.

Q Okay. Does the end of March, beginning of April --

A Yeah, that sounds reasonable.

Q Do you recall about how long he was there?

A I don't, I'm sorry.

Q Okay. And do you recall how long you were down to one agent?

A Okay, I see what you mean. Did you ask me before how long

████ was there in total?

Q Well, I meant -- what I wanted to ask was how long he was there as the --

A As the sole? I don't remember. It was a period of several days at least, but further than that I just don't know.

Q Okay. What were some of the issues with or causes for not being able to get the numbers of DS agents?

A We would put in the requests, and so I think it was a question of resources or availability.

Q Do you recall, was there ever an issue with the Libyan Government issuing visas?

A Absolutely.

Q Can you describe that?

A The Libyan Embassy here in Washington, D.C., was not fully staffed, as you would imagine for a new embassy, brand new personnel. They had pretty poor computer equipment, so there was often a delay in getting approvals, and then the issuance of requested diplomatic

visas.

Q And did that impact the number -- impact the arrival of DS agents?

A Yes, it did.

Q You also mentioned at some point that some SST team members came down from Tripoli.

A Uh-huh.

Q Do you recall about how long they were in Benghazi?

A They were there for about 3 weeks.

Q Okay. I know you mentioned the number. Can you remind me again how many?

A It was three or four.

Q Great. I know it's a long time ago --

A I know.

Q -- but do you happen to remember how many DS agents you had at the time as well?

A Two, I think, but I'm not sure.

Q Okay. And what prompted the SST members to come to Benghazi?

A Well, we had -- we were low on RSOs, and they were in Tripoli and they were available, so I asked that they come out, as well as to come do some training with our local guard force.

Q Were there any events that happened in Benghazi that prompted your request to bring them, to bring the SST members to Benghazi?

A I don't know. I don't remember what prompted me asking them to come other than they were available.

Q Okay. At any point during your time there do you recall whether or not there were actually five DS agents in Benghazi?

A No.

Q And were you aware that that was the staffing number that had been set for Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Let's talk a little bit about the local guard force. We've mentioned them before. When you arrived in place was the Blue Mountain Group. Were you aware of any issues that arose with any of the individuals that worked as the local guard force?

A While I was there or before?

Q Before or while you were there.

A Before, no, I wasn't. I didn't know very much about them before I arrived other than that's who the contract was with.

Q Okay.

A There were some disciplinary actions, as one would expect, during my time there, but that was handled by the RSO.

Q Okay. You said, "as one would expect." Why would one expect this?

A It's a large group. I mean, there's always, you know, something.

Q Okay. What type of disciplinary actions were taken?

A They were suspended.

Q Okay. Were they suspended indefinitely or --

A Oh, I'm sorry. They were let go, they were let go.

Q Oh, I see. Do you recall what caused them to be let go?

A One of them had graffiti outside on the compound walls, and so he was let go for defacing our property. And I don't remember what the other one was. He's the one I remember most clearly.

Q Now, you mentioned that you spoke Arabic. Is that correct?

A That's right.

Q Did the RSO speak Arabic?

A No.

Q Did you ever have to serve as interpreter for the RSO?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was that pretty commonplace or --

A No, because our guards and QRF, the 17th February, spoke English to some extent, but it was just when they felt like they needed to express themselves in Arabic to make a more full, because they felt more comfortable, that I would help.

Q Okay. Can you describe any instances where you served as the interpreter for the RSO?

A Yes. There was one instance when one of the guards had information that he thought was pertinent to security. I don't remember exactly what it was. So he wanted to tell it to the RSO, but he needed to tell it in Arabic.

Q Okay. And you said you don't recall what the information was. Do you recall if in response to the information provided the RSO

or you took any action?

A Yes. Yes, they did. They followed up on the individual that he named to see what was his status or who he was. I don't think we had very much follow-up in determining whether this information was correct or not.

Q Okay. Do you recall -- so you said -- you followed up on the individual that he named. Was that individual also a member of the local guard force?

A I don't remember, I'm sorry.

Q Were you aware if the local guard force had been vetted?

A I don't know what the vetting procedures would have been. I know that they were -- the local guard -- I'm sorry, I'm making my own confusion between QRF and the local guard force. We contracted that out, so the vetting would have taken place through RSO and the contractor.

Q So you were involved in contracting the vetting out or is that just the standard procedure of how it would happen?

A Contracting the vetting?

Q Yes.

A So the RSOs ran the names of all these guys through the security checks. So the contractor was not responsible for doing that.

Q Oh, I'm sorry, I misunderstood you. I thought you said that we contracted that out, referring to the vetting.

A We contracted out the actual gathering of the candidates.

Q Okay. And so the RSO would perform the vetting?

A That's right.

Q And were you aware that the RSO actually performed vetting of the local guard force while you were there?

A They did on a few occasions, yes, when we had new ones that were coming.

Q Okay. You just mentioned the QRF. Can you explain who they were.

A Uh-huh. They were members of the 17th of February militia who was -- which was assigned to us as -- I can't even remember why they were assigned to us. It was before I got there.

Q Okay. What role did they serve?

A They served as -- they would monitor sort of the perimeter. They stayed on compound. There were four of them. They were extra help.

Q And by stayed on compound, you mean lived on the compound?

A Four of them lived in a house on the compound. When I say lived, I mean they had their own homes, but when they were with us they would stay on the compound.

Q Did they participate in movements off the compound?

A Yes, they did.

Q And was that the case during your entire time in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Were these members of the QRF, were they also vetted?

A That I -- if so, I don't know the process.

Q Okay. Did the individuals who were assigned to the QRF

change during your time in Benghazi?

A A few, maybe one or two sort of were replaced or kind of changed, switched in or out.

Q Do you know why the individuals that were assigned left?

A Well, I think one just wanted to go home and -- no. But, I mean, it wasn't anything nefarious.

Q Were you aware of any issues with the QRF, any issues with the individuals that served in the QRF, such as failing to report on time or anything?

A I think a couple of times they were not prompt, as prompt as the RSO may have liked.

Q Any other issues that come to mind?

A No. It's making me smile when I think about these guys.

Q Do you care to share why you're smiling?

A They were, you know, they were fun guys to have around. And they were sort of like the -- they really appreciated the training that the RSOs gave them.

Q So we touched on this briefly earlier about security incidents. I'm just going to go list a few. There are some that I might show you some documents regarding to refresh your recollection.

So you arrived in early March, closer to the beginning of March, correct?

A That's right.

Q In the middle of March, around the 13th, do you recall there being some journalists that were detained, including one American

citizen?

A I do remember that, yes.

Q Okay. And what do you recall about that?

A I remember being notified because the person was American, and I don't remember how the information came to me. I don't remember who gave me a call.

Q Okay. Why were you notified?

A Because I was American.

Q Okay. And as the principal officer in Benghazi did that relate to your role as the principal officer?

A We didn't have a consulate per se, so we didn't have the facilities to provide American citizens services, which is what a consulate would do. I think they just called me because I was an American.

Q Okay. What was your understanding of the status of the mission in Benghazi? You said it wasn't a consulate.

A No.

Q What status was it?

A We would call it like a diplomatic presence, a special diplomatic facility.

Q What was your understanding of how long that diplomatic presence would be in Benghazi?

A It was -- when I arrived we had a -- the contract to basically lease the villas where we were was through the end of 2012 and with the option of renewing that.



Q Did you have any understanding or idea of whether or not it would actually be renewed at the end of 2012?

A It was dependent on finances and whether we wanted to remain in that location or collocate.

Q [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED].

Q Okay. So did that discussion come up during your time there?

A No, I think that discussion came up prior.

Q Okay. Was that discussion ever revisited during your time there?

A No, no, we didn't -- I knew that there were discussions in Tripoli about possibly doing that, but it didn't occur when I was there.

Q Did you know why it didn't occur?

A Actually I don't.

Q What did you think about the possibility of collocating?

A I had not -- I didn't really think too much about it. I mean, they had better food, so it would have been nice for me. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mr. Evers. And I would just caution, if you need to provide answers in a classified setting, we do have the facilities to do that.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Another security incident. Do you recall around, again,

the middle of March that there were some ARSO or DS agents that were stopped at a security checkpoint?

A Yes.

Q What do you recall about that?

A They were going to do an advance for an outing that I was going to undertake, and so they were, as they would do, sort of, you know, scouting the routes and determining the best way to go. They were stopped by one -- a militia, I don't know which one, and asked to come back with them to that militia's headquarters.

Q Do you recall how that was resolved?

A It resolved itself. I mean, I know I made some calls to the head of the -- the head of, you know, a security service I thought might be able to provide assistance, and I think they were there for a couple of hours and eventually told, you know, thank you, we're sorry, please go.

Q What was the explanation for why they were stopped?

A That they didn't have permits or the correct documentation or identification on the car.

Q To your knowledge, had anything like that happened before?

A No.

Q Were you aware of that happening to any of the other Western countries there?

A It did.

Q Was this prior to or after this particular incident?

A I don't remember exactly specific incidents, I just know

I talked with counterparts, and it happened to them as well.

Q     Okay. I'm going to show you an exhibit. I'm going to mark it as Exhibit 1.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Feel free to take your time reading through that.

A Okay.

Q Thank you. So for the record, this is an email chain. It's marked as unclassified, dated March 15, 2012. And it begins with an email from you to [REDACTED] and to [REDACTED], and it's referring to a developing situation. And you mention two individuals were out on a site advance near the airport. Is this the same event that we were just discussing?

A Yes, it is.

Q I want to direct your attention to the second paragraph in your email. It's at the very bottom.

A Right here?

Q Yes. And it says, "[REDACTED] is on his way there, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]." Do you know who [REDACTED] is?

A I do.

Q Okay. And what was his role with the mission? Did he have a role with the mission in Benghazi?

Mr. Evers. Sheria, if you don't mind, I've done a little legwork on this issue, and while I think we can, as long as Ms. [REDACTED] is comfortable that we can discuss it in an unclassified setting in response to your actual questions, we can do so. [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Mr. Evers. Thank you very much.

Ms. [REDACTED]. He was, I would say, a political advisor.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Okay. And in this particular email it says, quote, "[REDACTED] is on his way there." It seems to be referring to where the individuals who were detained were. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q Do you recall what his role was in helping to resolve this particular situation, if any?

A I'm sure he was able to speak in Arabic with the militia, which would have been useful since the RSOs didn't really understand.

Q Okay. You mentioned that he was -- you said a political advisor?

A He was a part-time employee. He provided a lot of functions to the mission in Benghazi. So political advisor is the closest I can come.

Q Okay. Can you describe some of the functions that he provided?

A He was able to introduce me to people. He knew the city. He could make recommendations on what might be -- who might be useful to get to know. Or he could facilitate contacts. He could -- in any embassy overseas you have local staff that you rely on heavily for local knowledge, and so that's what he provided.

Q Okay. And did someone provide his name to you prior to coming to Benghazi?

A He was already affiliated with the mission when I got there.

Q Okay. Do you know how long he had been affiliated with the mission?

A I know he was with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] predecessor, [REDACTED]. Prior to that I don't know.

Q Okay. I'm going to run through some more incidents, some of which I have emails to refresh your memory if you don't recall. Some aren't necessarily related to the actual mission compound itself but happened in Benghazi.

A Okay. All right.

Q Do you recall in the middle of March there was a large crowd demonstrating that was attacked by armed individuals?

A I think I would need more specifics on that.

Q Okay. A large crowd had gathered, demonstrating. There was some unrest about I think the issue that you mentioned earlier, about feeling disenfranchised from Tripoli. At some point during that demonstration a number of men entered the crowd, and they had weapons on them and began attacking individuals. Do you recall any incidents like that?

A I don't. I'm not going to say that didn't happen, but I don't know which one you're referring to.

Q This would have happened in early March, so within about 2 weeks of your arrival.

A Would it be at the police headquarters?

Q I think it was close to the police headquarters.

A Okay. Yes, I do remember this.

Q Okay. And what do you recall about that?

A I recall that there was a group of -- what I was told, I wasn't there -- a group gathering outside of a facility where some old Qadhafi cars and trucks were stored, and they were trying to get access to it.

Q Okay.

A That's what I was told.

Q And did that impact any -- were there any changes that were undertaken by the RSO or yourself in response to that event?

A Not that I remember.

Q Do you recall another instance, possibly around 2 or 3 days later, where gunmen entered a U.K. school and attempted to steal some of the vehicles stored there?

A Yes, I recall that.

Q What do you recall about that?

A Exactly what you just said, that gunmen entered the school and tried to steal cars and stuff.

Q Okay. Do you recall -- in these instances, how would you normally become aware of these types of incidents?

A Let's see. Generally, I don't think there was any -- there wasn't really one way in terms of the school. It's because I knew the school, the people who ran the school, so they let me know what was

going on.

In terms of the police, there was really no one way. I mean, we all had phone calls and email and things like that, so messages could get -- word got around pretty fast.

Q Okay. Do you recall an incident, this probably would have been about your third week in Benghazi, where a local militia attempted to enter the compound?

A Local militia?

Q Or, like, the local police force tried to enter the compound. There was an alert that there had been a fire on the compound, and so they tried to enter the compound, and it set off -- the duck-and-cover alarm was set off.

A I vaguely recall that.

Q Okay. What do you recall about that?

A That they in response to a fire were attempting to -- or perceived fire, I don't think there actually was a fire -- attempted to come on to the compound. I hadn't thought about that in so long.

Q Do you recall whether there was actually a fire?

A I don't think that there was, no.

Q Okay. Do you recall if that was related to any of the local guard force members?

A I don't remember.

Q What about on April 6, do you recall there being an IED thrown over the wall?

A I do.



Q What do you recall about that?

A I recall that there was I think what we determined later to be gelatina or a fish bomb tossed over the wall, and it caused some minor damage to the trees and the foliage on the compound.

Q Is gelatina common or was it common in Libya?

A Yes.

Q Were you familiar with the type of explosion that it could generate?

A I did not, not personally.

Q I'm going to show you what I'm going to mark as Exhibit 2.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

Was marked for identification.]

Ms. Clarke. I apologize. Some of the originals that we had, some of the printing wasn't the best. Feel free to read through the document and take your time. I will note that what I want to discuss is the beginning of the page with the email that you sent.

Ms. [REDACTED]. Okay. This is a little bit hard to read.

Okay, yes.

Mr. Evers. At least my copy seems to have two documents stapled together. This states document number --

Ms. Clarke. Oh, you are correct. That's fine. I think they are all related to the visa issue.

Mr. Evers. Do you want to mark them as separate exhibits for clarity?

Ms. Clarke. Actually, I'm just interested in the first one, so

we can remove the second one.

Ms. Jackson. Why don't we make Exhibit 2 the first three pages.

Mr. Evers. So Exhibit 2 will be doc ID C05390357, and it is three pages, and we're going to exclude three pages of another document.

Ms. Jackson. We can just tear them off

Ms. Clarke. Yes. Thank you.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So Exhibit 2, again doc ID C05390357, it is an email chain which you are on, and it's discussing visa advisories. And I just want to focus on the top front page of the email that you sent. Do you recall this email?

A Yes.

Q Okay. We mentioned earlier the discussion about the issue that the Libyan Government's inability to issue visas was having on the ability to actually have DS agents come. In this email, on the first sentence of the first paragraph, you say, "Our IED incident from last night only underscores the seriousness of these delays." Are you referring to the incident that we just discussed, about the gelatina?

A Yes.

Q Now, do you recall, what happened with that incident? Were there any suspects that were detained? Describe to me what happened.

A Yes, there were two suspects. Two suspects were detained at our request.

Q Okay. Who were those individuals, if you recall, or did they have a relation to the compound?

A At least one of them was this guard who had graffitied the word "love," I think it was, on the outside of the consulate -- or the compound.

Q Okay. Do you recall who the other individual was?

A I don't. I'm not entirely sure. I believe he was also from the local guard force.

Q The individual who had graffitied the compound, he was let go. Is that correct?

A Eventually he was.

Q Do you recall if at this point in time, during the IED incident, if he was still employed?

A Oh, I see what you mean. No, I think he had been let go -- he had been let go prior to this.

Q Okay. And once they were detained, what happened to those individuals?

A I am not sure. I know that they were detained for a number of days. I wasn't involved in any questioning or I didn't go see them in jail.

Q Okay. After seeing this email and highlighting that, as you state, quote, "this only underscores the seriousness of these delays," was there any change as far as the ability to get the DS agents in country? Did this help prompt along, help in Washington or help facilitate in visas?

A I don't think it did.

Q Do you recall if that issue with the Libyan Government

issuing visas was resolved during your time there?

A I don't think there was. I mean, it was better at some times, and it was faster at some times and slower at others, really just depending on who was staffing the Embassy here in Washington.

Q Okay. Were there any other factors that impacted how quickly or slowly the visas were issued?

A I mean, I can only say that they had inferior computer equipment and this was a new process for them. So --

Q Do you recall on April 10 an IED attack on a U.N. envoy?

A Yes.

Q And what do you recall about that?

A I recall that the U.N. envoy's convoy was coming on the coastal road, and it was attacked by I'm not sure what, but something was launched at it, and there was some damage to the car, but nobody was hurt.

Q Okay. Do you recall if this was a different type of IED than what had a few days prior been launched?

A I don't think it was ever determined exactly what it was.

Q Were there any changes implemented or prompted because of this attack?

A We would always have a weekly security meeting with the other foreign presences there, and I don't think that we made any changes based on either their telling of what happened or any recommendations. I mean, we already had the most secure profile of anybody.

Q Okay. Now, you said, just to break your answer down a little bit, you said we would always have weekly security meetings with other foreign presences. Who was the "we"?

A Oh, I mean the Americans, the Turks, the Brits, basically the representatives of some Western, some Arab nations just to share information.

Q Did you participate in those meetings?

A I did.

Q And what was the purpose of those meetings?

A It's like you would do at any embassy or consulate. You get together with your peers and you talk about what you're seeing and what each other is doing, you know, share ideas.

Q Did you have any -- did you exchange any intelligence reports during those meetings?

A Oh, no. No.

Q Did you exchange reports with the Western entities or the other entities there at any other time?

A You mean, like, classified reports?

Q Or just intel reports, not necessarily classified.

A We never shared any reporting, no.

Q Once you conducted these meetings, did you provide any reports to your chain of command regarding those meetings?

A Yeah, we would -- I would write up an email saying that we met today, the U.K. hosted, we talked about the upcoming events.

Q Who would you usually provide those emails to?

A I would email them to Tripoli. I can't remember exactly who I'd email them to, Tripoli and the desk, which is the Maghreb desk here at the State Department.

Q Okay. And just to step back a little bit, we didn't discuss, what was some of the communication equipment that you or capabilities that you had in Benghazi?

A In terms of disseminating information?

Q Yes.

A Well, I had a laptop and cell phone. We had the ability to process classified information, but not to print it.

Q Okay.

A And we had access to OpenNet. Internet access was spotty. It was because the satellite that went rotating, sometimes the sun would block the satellite. It was always a big part of every afternoon, we would just stop getting email.

Ms. Jackson. Naptime.

Ms. [REDACTED]. Pretty much. That's when I would go do some CrossFit.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q In response -- or around the time -- following up to the -- let me start over.

Following the IED attack on the U.N. envoy, we talked a little bit earlier about Tripoli sending SST members down. Do you recall if that was related to this incident?

A To the U.N. convoy?

Q Uh-huh.

A I don't recall if it was directly related to that, but it was around the same time, however.

Q Okay. And do you recall an incident -- there were three incidents that occurred around the same time, maybe within a 24-hour period. There was an attempted jail break, a bombing of the north courthouse, and then contractors for the global offshore projects were abducted briefly. Do you recall those instances?

A I do. I do.

Q Okay. What do you recall about the attempted jail break?

A The attempted jail break was -- there were a couple of different explanations given for it. Either they were former Qadhafi supporters who were in jail and got out or somebody was, you know, basically sprung by their family or something like that. So it wasn't -- it wasn't of particular political concern.

Q All right.

A That's what I remember. And I don't remember there being any follow-up to it. Excuse me.

Q When you say it wasn't of any particular political concern, were the other incidents of political concern?

A No. But I just mention that because I said they possibly were Qadhafi loyalists.

Q Okay. What about the bombing of the north courthouse. Do you recall that incident?

A I do.

Q Okay. And what do you recall about that?

A There was a bomb possibly in a suitcase that was laid, I guess, at the foot of one of the walls of the north courthouse that detonated, and I think took down part of the walls of the north courthouse.

Q How did you become aware of that, if you recall?

A It may have been one of my U.N. colleagues who called us. I mean, again, we all had good communication with each other, so we would know -- be able to share information.

Q Do you recall another incident, it happened in late May, around the 28th, where the International Committee for the Red Cross was attacked?

A I do.

Q What do you recall about that incident?

A That they were -- there was -- I don't know what, if it was



ever determined, what it was, but they were hit with something. I believe it was in the early morning. And no one was injured, but the building I think had some damage to it.

Q And do you recall if it was determined who conducted the attack?

A No, not while I was there.

Q Okay. I see that I'm getting close to the end of my hour. So we can go off the record; and if you'd like, we can take a break.

A That's fine. Thank you.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MR. KENNY:

Q We can go back on the record. The time is 11:17.

Ms. [REDACTED], I just want to take the opportunity to reintroduce myself. My name is Peter Kenny. I'm a minority counsel with Ranking Member Cummings. I'm joined here today by my colleagues. This is Heather Sawyer, who is the chief counsel for the minority staff, as well as Ronak Desai, seated beside me. Just on behalf of the committee's minority staff, we want to thank you, again, for your appearance here today and for your service to our country.

A Thank you.

Q We understand that appearing before Congress can seem to be a very daunting experience. So we just want to assure you that we will work with you to make this process as simple and straightforward as possible. We also want to take a moment to acknowledge that we understand that you and your colleagues lost friends and fellow

patriots on the night of the attacks. So, again, we just want to thank you for your service and for being here again.

A Thank you.

Q We talked a little bit in the last hour about some of your previous postings, other posts where you had been assigned, where you had worked. You walked us through several of the countries where you have been posted. Maybe you could help explain for us, were any of those considered hardship posts at the time that you were assigned to them?

A Yes. Lebanon was. Sudan was. Pakistan most definitely was. And Jerusalem, to a lesser extent.

Q Okay. And what was your understanding of what that meant, for a post to be a hardship?

A It's basically a calculus, a hardship post. It comes down to, there is a pay differential based on security assessments and access to, you know, western goods, things that you might want. So it's a category that is made by the management. But a hardship post is -- it's just designated as a hardship post.

Q Okay. Spring of 2012, was there a particular geographic bureau to which you were assigned? Were you assigned to a functional bureau?

A I was assigned, at that point, to CSO, Conflict and Stabilization Operations.

Q Okay. And what is CSO?

A A CSO is a part of the Department that's meant to -- for

the lack of a better word -- deploy officers to areas of potential conflict. You know, African elections, for example, or -- they were active in a lot of places.

Q Okay. So did that mission fit within what U.S. foreign policy was towards Libya around the time of --

A Well, I was assigned to them, but I had been asked on a more personal capacity to go to Benghazi. So they released me to do that.

Q Okay. So we discussed in the last hour a little bit about Ambassador Stevens. The Ambassador had personally requested you or -- so you felt like you were being recruited for this position; is that fair?

A I don't know if I would say "recruited." I mean, he asked me if I would go. And of course I said yes.

Q Did they explain what the mission was at that time or what they wanted you to perform? Or did he explain that?

A To act as a principal officer and to kind of conduct diplomacy for, and advance U.S. security interests in eastern Libya. It's kind of writ large. It's a broad task.

Q And at that time, did he explain to you what the importance of eastern Libya was in relation to broader dynamics in Libya?

A He did. I mean, he was very knowledgeable.

Q Okay. And do you recall what he shared with you about the importance of Benghazi and eastern Libya?

A He had been there during the time when the rebels coalesced in Benghazi and it became sort of their headquarters. So that's, from

his standpoint, what was the incident in which it became, you know, important to be there.

Q Okay. Were you aware of whether the Ambassador had strong views on maintaining or keeping a U.S. presence in Benghazi? Was that something he shared with you at that time?

A He wanted to keep it, because he thought it was important.

Q Okay. That's very helpful. Thank you.

And we talked in the last hour a little bit about some of the special skills and your experiences that you brought to the table. You mentioned your Arabic training, your Middle East experience. Did you feel that you had the right mix of skills and experience for this particular engagement, this assignment?

A I did, yes.

Q Okay. At the time, was your understanding that Benghazi was a major population center?

A Yeah. I knew it was the -- yes. I think I knew it was a pretty big city for Tripoli -- pardon, for Libya.

Q Okay. Do you recall whether it was also a major commercial center?

A It had been. The potential for it to become one again was something that we were trying to, you know, to investigate.

Q Okay. And what was your understanding of the role that Benghazi played specifically during the revolution which predates your assignment, of course. But do you have an understanding of what role --

A Right. Well, it's a symbolic role because it was sort of where it began.

Q And did that role change at all after the fall of Qadhafi? What was the role of Benghazi post-Qadhafi?

A It remained the headquarters for the transitional government until they moved to Tripoli. But, again, as the major city of a very large province, it had its own significance.

Q Okay. Thank you. That's helpful.

In the course of our discussion today, I'm going to be using a handful of documents.

A Sure.

Q I'm sorry.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Just to follow up, you talked a little bit about the importance of Benghazi vis-à-vis Libya and what was happening in Libya. What was your sense of the importance of the U.S. Government being present in Benghazi?

A I thought it was very important to have, you know, U.S. representation, presence in a very critical part of a very important country in the region. So I thought it was important.

Q And was your sense of the importance both that it was important for Libya and the people of Libya and for the U.S. Government, kind of for both? Or was it just for one or --

A Absolutely. I was overwhelmed by how much gratitude people expressed to me for being an American and being there. It was

quite unlike any other Arab country I had been in before, actually.

Q And I think we will get to some of the other places you visited. But was that your sense both when you were in Benghazi and when you also had the opportunity to get outside Benghazi?

A It was, yes.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Just real briefly to follow up on that point, did you have any personal experiences with -- do you recall seeing any signs or symbols of how the residents of Benghazi felt towards the U.S. during the time that you were there?

A Signs or symbols? Or what do you mean?

Q Just, do you have any personal knowledge firsthand? You said that you'd never experienced that much gratitude when you were there. I just wonder if you have any personal examples of that?

A Well, not long after I arrived, it was the first anniversary of the NATO intervention, and there were celebrations. And you had the American flag and the Libyan -- new Libyan flag, Italy, U.K., France, all together hanging. I have never seen that before. It was demonstrable, it was visible that, you know, foreign interest in new Libya was very important.

Q And where were those flags hanging?

A They were hanging down in Martyrs' Square.

Q Okay. And that's located in the central part of the city?

A It's on the coast.

Q On the coast, so the north side. Okay.

And what I would like to do now is we will use a few documents to help guide our discussion. I know in the course of the last hour we were walking you through some incidents. Our intent here is really to just kind of refresh your recollection and also from a time perspective, just focus on a couple key points and key decision events.

This first document is, I believe, Exhibit 3.

Mr. Evers. That's right.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So just to describe this document, this is a Benghazi situation report. It appears to be sent from, at the very top, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], dated May 23, 2012. The document number is C 05389029.

Within this document, there appears to be a Benghazi situation report that's dated the same date, May 23, 2012, and it's sent from you to, it looks like a large group of people as well as some internal State Department distribution lists. I would just like to begin by asking, what are these Benghazi situation reports, and why are they important?

A I did this maybe two or three times a week. I would just say what I had been working on, what I was noticing. It's typical reporting. It's a reporting cable, essentially.

Q Okay. The first bullet here listed says, "Federalists feeling cornered?" It appears to describe a meeting that the PO -- I

assume that's --

A Me.

Q -- you had with a member of the Federalist movement and some militia activity around Benghazi. I know that you had mentioned or touched upon Federalism and the Federalist movement in the last hour. Again, I would just like to understand what the role of Benghazi or eastern Libya was and maybe why following or tracking Federalism would have been important.

A So Benghazi and the east, Cyrenaica has historically been cut off from the resources of the center, both during the Italian occupation as well as during the Qadhafi era. That's access to education, to finances, to political representation.

So in this new Libya, there was a group of individuals from the east who felt that perhaps they could sort of assert their access or their right to share power, share resources. And so that was the Federalist movement. They wanted to put Libya into three -- back into three basic Federal provinces versus one whole country.

Q And did you view that as an important issue to monitor and report on?

A I did.

Q Okay. Did you view it as important to the upcoming national elections that were taking place in Libya?

A Very much so.

Q Okay. Why is that?

A Because the Federalists had the opportunity -- or could and



threatened on occasion to try to disrupt the elections if there wasn't a certain representation in the -- basically the councils that were being elected that was reserved for the east. And if they were to boycott, threaten, or disrupt elections, that was obviously not in U.S. interests and no one's interests.

Q And that would have been harmful to the democratic process?

A Yes.

Q This second paragraph in the top bullet here refers to the discussion that you had with this contact, and it appears that this person uses the word or used the word "marginalization of the east" on the third line. Do you see that?

A Mm-hmm.

Q Was that a concern that you heard from many contacts in eastern Libya, this concern that they were being marginalized from what was occurring in Tripoli in the west?

A Yes, from very many.

Q Okay. And how seriously was that concern taken by those people or --

A Well, they wanted to be able to participate again fully in the management of the country, as they had felt that they had not been able to for a very long time. So -- rightly so, as most of the oil resources are in the east. And they just wanted the previous centralization of the government to be more equitable and to have representation in the east as well as the south.

Q Okay. And following up on -- and you had mentioned this

also in the last hour about oil production in eastern Libya. But the last bullet here, which reads AGOCO oil production back at prerevolution levels. Just first, what is AGOCO?

A AGOCO is the national oil company.

Q Okay. And was that the largest or is that the largest oil company in Libya?

A It was. I don't know if it is still.

Q Okay. And was that company located in Benghazi --

A It was.

Q -- at the time? Okay. And was it also important to follow and report on progress or status updates regarding oil production in the east?

A It was. That was of great interest to people here in Washington.

Q Okay. I would also like to just point out that the third bullet in this document refers to the ICRC attack that occurred on May 22. I know that was discussed in the previous round. Just to let you know, we will return to that. But I would like to move on.

We talked in the last hour about some of the other foreign missions, specifically the western missions that were operated in Benghazi at the time that you were there. And you discussed that there were always weekly security meetings that would take place between them. You mentioned at that time -- and I had written this down, so please correct me if I have recorded this incorrectly -- but that you thought the U.S. had the most secure profile of anyone out of the group

with whom you met. Could you just maybe explain or elaborate what you meant by that?

A We used armored cars exclusively, which is not the case with the other missions. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] I was always accompanied, or an American principal officer, those before me too were always accompanying me in fully armored vehicles.

Q Okay. And in the course of the weekly security meetings that you had, did you ever hear any concerns from some of these other nations about their specific security posture? For instance, [REDACTED]

A No. I mean, I think at one point later on [REDACTED]

Q Okay. And some of those countries that we discussed earlier, what was your understanding of why they were engaged in Benghazi?

A The Italian consulate was there, and it was an actual consulate, because of the historic association with the country. The French and the British, like us, were there because they had been there during the revolution and maintained their interest and presence there. The Egyptians, because obviously it's just next door. And, you know, you have got a number of the Arab countries because they are, you know, vested, and Libya is part of the Arab League.

Q Okay. Thank you. That's very helpful.

I would like to shift gears a little bit and return to a discussion we had in the last hour, specifically on diplomatic security staffing and staffing at the compound. We understand, based on some of your statements, that the levels of security staffing fluctuated during the time that you were there. And again, it sounded like the numbers were between three and one DS agent; is that correct, strictly for the DS side?

A That's right.

Q Okay. Could you just help us understand what the impact of those lower staffing numbers were? Did it restrict your ability to move?

A It did restrict my ability to move because we -- with only one, it was very hard to, you know, be out in the city as well as, you know, do the things that are necessary to safeguard the compound itself.

Q Okay. Did you have those same concerns about your ability to move off compound when you had the three DS agents as well?

A It was easier, certainly. I mean, it was easier on everybody because it wasn't such a hard workload.

Q Okay. There was a reference in the last hour to a recommendation that DS resource security staffing with five DS agents in Benghazi. Do you know why it was a challenge for Diplomatic Security, the Bureau, to reach that five-agent --

A I was told that it was this visa issue that we had discussed that was delayed as well as availability of agents and resources.

Q Okay. And when you say "availability," can you maybe elaborate on what you mean by that or whatever?

A Unassigned DS agents or DS agents at other posts who could be released or released for periods of time.

Q Okay. And how did you learn about these challenges? Was it just through your involvement in the process, discussions with DS agents on the compound?

A I had known about it before, before I went, and then certainly with discussions with them, with the agents on the compound.

Q Okay. Were you aware that this was a longstanding challenge that was facing the special mission in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were you aware at all of whether there had been any sort of decision within the Bureau of Diplomatic Security to at Main State cap the number of DS agents on the compound at three instead of five?

A I'm not aware of that.

Q Okay. So you don't recall any discussions on the compound maybe between or among the DS agents about a cap of three?

A No. To my understanding, would always wanted five.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Okay. Just to continue our discussion here, I will mark this as Exhibit 4. This is an email dated March 25, 2012. It's from

you to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with the subject, "Re: Draft request for DS TDY and FTE support." I will give you a moment to read the document. The Bates number for this is C05579088.

A Okay. Yes.

Q Okay. So let's start at the bottom of this page here. And this is an earlier email in the same thread. It's dated March 22, 2012. Here, [REDACTED] writes to you and [REDACTED]. And he stated the following, "As discussed, please find a draft request to DS HQ for our TDY support along with our concurrence on their proposal for six FTE for the RSO office." And he attaches what appears to be a draft cable focusing on Tripoli security resources. In that draft cable, there appears to be a section entitled "DS agent support in Benghazi." Do you see that?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall this email exchange?

A I do.

Q Do you recall this draft request that RSO [REDACTED] had prepared?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So responding to [REDACTED] -- this is a few days later; so this is on March 25, 2012 -- [REDACTED] responded to this draft cable. And she states the following, "I think the Benghazi section may need a little more clarification. For example, once we get the LES drivers onboard, will we need five DS agents? If not, it would be good to flag that figure (5) as a temporary need that will

decrease once the LES drivers are onboard."

A Uh-huh.

Q What was your understanding of what Deputy Chief of Mission [REDACTED] was referring to when she mentioned the LES driver program in Benghazi?

A Because the RSOs were having to do -- when we were low-resource, they were having to do chauffeur duties; that is part of what they had been doing. Were we to get trained local drivers onboard, they would not have to do that so much.

Q Okay. And do you know who initiated the program to transition the DS agents off of the chauffeur duties?

A I don't remember who initiated it, no.

Q Okay. Did you have a sense of why that was being done?

A I do. That if you are driving the vehicle, you are not able to sort of pay attention to kind of what's around you and you are distracted.

Q Okay. Do you know if the program was also meant to avoid using the DS agents as drivers to free them up so that they could perform protective security details?

A That's correct.

Q Okay. Had you heard whether anyone -- whether at post, whether back at Main State -- had expressed frustration that the DS agents were being used as drivers?

A Yes, I believe so.

Q What do you recall of that?

A Exactly that, that there was frustration that they were being used as drivers.

Q And what was your understanding of where that frustration was coming from?

A That, I don't know. I don't know. It could have been personal. I just don't know.

Q Okay. I would like to just ask, were you supportive of this effort to hire the local drivers and shift the DS agents over to focus more on pure security-related tasks?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And can you just explain why?

A Because the DS agents, with their specialized training, are better equipped to do things that we needed done, such as, you know, perimeter security, protecting principal officers, getting to know their counterparts within Benghazi. And that would be made easier by having the driving duties taken over by somebody else.

Q Okay. Did you think that by bringing the LES drivers onboard that Benghazi might not require the five DS agents?

A I don't remember that. But, I mean, I'm reading this email. It seems like I thought that -- or I agreed with the RSOs that if we could get those, we may need to revisit the need for five.

Q Okay. Thanks. That is helpful. We will just move up the chain here. So this is a subsequent email written by you on the same date, March 25, 2012, where you stated the following, and I will focus on the first point at the top. "Before I send in some suggested edits,



would it be possible to get RSO's take on the following: Benghazi's request for five DS agents. There was a commitment made some time ago in which DS agreed to support five TDY agents in Benghazi. This has never happened. The status quo has been three. Is it safe/reasonable to assume that three will remain the number that we can expect? That's fine if that's the case. I just need to know for planning purposes."

And again, just further to our discussion, it sounds like during your time, three agents was the steady state and you weren't able to achieve the five DS agents; is that --

A Right. We did not get to five.

Q Okay. I'm just trying to understand your question here. So it sounds like you are trying to get a sense of whether, despite this request for five DS agents that RSO [REDACTED] was preparing, that there might still be an expectation of only three agents being delivered; is that right?

A It was that we hadn't had five. And at that time, I was not in any position to expect that we would have five.

Q Okay. And is that just because --

A Because we hadn't up until that point.

Q You hadn't up until that point. Okay.

Again, you state that that's fine. If that's the case, I just need to know for planning purposes. Can you just explain for us the planning that would have been involved if the DS staffing had changed?

A Well, we would have to rethink some of the -- if we remained small, we didn't have additional drivers, we would have to rethink

movements that we can undertake. It would also affect any type of TDY support, such as members of other parts of the mission, say Tripoli, wanting to come out and, you know, to do their own work in Libya, such as USAID. We wouldn't be able to fully accommodate them.

Q Okay. In the bullet below, you state, "The cable notes that personnel who have taken FACT/SNOE do not need DS escorts with them. It is the case with Benghazi as well. For example, I have taken FACT three times. Am I exempt from needing a DS agent to travel with me, provided we have local drivers onboard? If, as principal officer, I do need a DS escort, can we suppose that other TD wires who had FACT do not need one unless traveling after dark." So just to unpack this, FACT is the Foreign Affairs Counterterrorism Training; is that right?

A Yes.

Q And what is SNOE, S-N-O-E?

A SNOE is a longer 3-week training. I don't remember what it stands for.

Q Okay. And again, we discussed this before. Here you mentioned that you had taken FACT three times. Was that something you were required to do?

A Before going to a hardship post, yes, you were required to take FACT.

Q Okay. Is that because it expires after a certain amount of time?

A It expires I believe after 5 years. I took it three times. So obviously I took it in between -- maybe less, fewer than 5-year

periods.

Q Okay. Was your understanding from the draft cable that RSO [REDACTED] had sent that Tripoli did not require DS agents to accompany FACT-trained employees or personnel in Tripoli?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So in asking your question here, you are just seeking clarification of whether that policy also applied to Benghazi; is that right?

A That's correct.

Q Okay. Did you support the policy that RSO [REDACTED] articulated that applied to Tripoli?

A I did. I did.

Q Okay. Can you explain why?

A It would increase our ability to accommodate TDY or to get people from other agencies who might want to come to Benghazi. And if we were to only have up to three RSOs, it would make work for them a bit easier.

Q Okay. And was your understanding that in Tripoli, they, in fact, implemented that policy, that they allowed U.S. personnel to travel -- if had they received FACT training without a DS escort?

A That's correct.

Q Was that policy ever actually applied to Benghazi?

A It was not.

Q Can you explain why not?

A Let me try to remember, actually. Well, since it was

determined that, as principal officer, I would need a DS escort, even though I had already had FACT training. And so we didn't have the opportunity, I think, to test out, you know, the system that was in place in Tripoli. We didn't have -- there weren't people that were coming for TDY.

Actually, that's not true. I take that back. I think one person did come from Tripoli and was taken to meetings without the DS escort.

Q Okay. So did you have any discussions about whether this policy would apply with the diplomatic security staff? Do you recall?

A Did I discuss it with the diplomatic --

Q Yes.

A I'm sure I did.

Q Did they raise any concerns about it to you?

A Well, the concern that they raised was that it shouldn't apply to me. That I would require a DS escort.

Q That you would require a DS escort?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And how was that ultimately resolved? Did you defer to their judgment on the matter?

A I did.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Can I just interject with a quick question?

We sometimes hear about a little bit of tension between the security side who wants to make sure that people are safe at all times

and mitigate risks, and the folks on the ground trying to push out the mission.

How did you feel that relationship worked in the time you were in Benghazi? You said you certainly deferred to the recommendations of the security team. Did you feel that it was a positive relationship?

A Oh, I had a very positive relationship with all of the guys who -- and one woman -- who worked as RSOs. Did I want to do more? That's yes. But that's just me. I mean, I can only speak for myself.

Q And kind of understanding that Benghazi was a hardship post, what is the value of you being able to get out and push that boundary as best you can in a secure way?

A Well, I think the hardship part is irrelevant. It was important to be there and to make as many contacts, to do the kind of reporting we do anywhere however we could. So it being hardship or not was irrelevant to the mission. It was only relevant to the security profile.

Q So in terms of, though, that personal contact that you are allowed to get, if you get off-compound, what is the value of that kind of personal contact?

A There are a number of things. It's going to somebody at their place of business or at their home. It's respectful. It's also, you need context. You need to see what you are talking about. I could have and did -- if the RSO said "let's not go out right now" -- have people come to see me in my office. But it's just a more sterile experience. So there's that. There's also not -- some people aren't

comfortable coming to an American presence. They are afraid they might be followed. It happens all over.

Q So in terms of achieving the mission, it was certainly helpful and important to be in Benghazi. Would it have been more difficult to conduct those same kinds of contacts and do that kind of work from Tripoli?

A Absolutely.

Q And then if we weren't in either Tripoli or Benghazi, if we were not in Libya at all, how would that have impacted the mission, the policy mission that we were conducting in Libya?

A We wouldn't have been able to do anything. I mean, everyone can see that right now. We have no presence.

Ms. Sawyer. Okay.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Just real quickly to close out on this document, Exhibit 4. So you had asked for the RSO's take on this. Did you ever hear back from the RSO on these points?

A I believe so. But I would need to see the email.

Q That's fine.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 5

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Well, we can go ahead and we will mark this as Exhibit 5. This is an email dated March 25, 2012 from you to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. It has the subject, "Re: Draft request for DS TDY

and FTE support." The document number is C05579091.

A Uh-huh.

Q I will give you a moment to review this document.

A Okay.

Q And this email appears to be part of the same thread, although a separate chain. You write, "All, I inserted one sentence in the Benghazi section, noting that we should require less DS TDY support once the permanent ARSO and LES driver positions are staffed here."

Do you recall this email?

A I do.

Q Do you recall the cable that [REDACTED] had been preparing, that that was, in fact, submitted to Main State?

A I don't. And I'm just reading this, and I don't see that I actually did insert that language in here.

Q Perhaps we can -- we will help you here.

A All right. Thanks.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 6

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q We will mark this as Exhibit 6. So this is the cable 12 Tripoli 130 dated March 28, 2012 from Embassy Tripoli with the subject, "Request for DS TDY and FTE support."

Ms. Sawyer. I have fallen down in my task.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Does this appear to be the cable that --

A Yes.

Q -- [REDACTED] was preparing and that he, in fact, submitted?

A Yes. Yes. Yes.

Q So I will refer you to the Benghazi section of this memo which is the middle of the second page. I would like to read three sentences there in the middle of the paragraph that begin, "Embassy Tripoli is in the process of recruiting for LES drivers and an RSO. LES SPSS which will support operations in Benghazi. Post also plans to deploy a TDY RSO from Tripoli once expanded permanent staffing is established and stabilized. Once these positions are filled, post anticipates requiring fewer TDY DS agents to support Benghazi."

The last sentence here which doesn't appear in either Exhibit 4 or 5, the draft, is that the sentence that you said that you inserted?

A I don't know, but that would seem so.

Q Okay.

A He may have edited a little bit, but I'm not sure.

Q So, again, just to revisit this. So your view was that once certain locally-filled staff positions were filled, that the number of TDY DS agents in Benghazi could be reduced from the requested number of five to some lower number; is that right?

A That's right.

Q Do you recall if there was a formal response cable sent by D.C. to this cable?



A I don't recall.

Q Okay. So I will help you with that as well.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 7  
Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And this will be Exhibit 7. This is an email dated April 21, 2012. It's from you to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and others. It has the subject, "Re: Tripoli request for DS TDY and FTE support." This email appears to contain the cable of 12 State 38939, which is dated April 19, 2012. And just for the record, this cable is marked SBU.

A Okay.

Q Do you recall this email?

A Looking at it, I remember this.

Q Okay. Do you recall the underlying cable here that was sent, it appears, from D.C. to the embassy in Tripoli?

A I do.

Q I would like to refer you to the bottom of the second page. The cable appears to have a signature, a draft, and a clearance line. Do you see that?

A Uh-huh.

Q Okay. The signature line for this cable says, "Clinton." Does that mean that Secretary Clinton personally authorized this cable?

A No.

Q Okay. What does that mean?

A It's an automatic -- the Secretary of State's name always appears on cables that are going from Washington to the post.

Q Okay. So every cable that leaves Main State and goes overseas or to overseas posts would bear this stamp; is that correct?

A This or whatever, whoever the Secretary of State at the time was.

Q Okay. Do you have any reason to believe that Secretary Clinton did personally review this specific cable?

A I actually -- I don't know.

Q The other lines here appear to show who drafted and cleared this cable. There are some acronyms that are used here. So could you just maybe help explain for us who you believe, based on those markings, drafted and cleared this cable?

A Where are these?

Q So at the very bottom there, where it says drafted by, cleared by, approved by.

A DS IP NEA. Diplomatic security. IP, I don't know. NEA is Near Eastern Affairs.

Q Okay. That's under the "drafted by" line. And who is marked under "cleared by"?

A It says it's cleared by Department of State Charlene R DS/IP/OPO. I'm not sure what that is.

Q Okay. So you don't know who Charlene is here?

A I do know who Charlene is. I don't know what the DS/IP/OPO stands for.

Q Okay. Sure. And who is Charlene?

A Charlene was the deputy assistant secretary in diplomatic security.

Q Okay. And do you recall her last name?

A Lamb.

Q Okay. So Charlene Lamb, deputy assistant secretary. So she cleared this cable?

A She would have cleared this cable.

Q Okay. I would just like to move up the page here. Item number three, the cable states, "DS will continue to provide DS agent support in Benghazi. DS/IP recommends the post continues its efforts to hire LES drivers for Benghazi to enable the DS TDYers to solely perform their protective security function. DS IP also recommends a joint reassessment of the number of DS agents requested for Benghazi to include input from RSO Tripoli, TDY RSO Benghazi, and DS/IP in an effort to develop a way forward."

So just to connect these documents in our discussion, is the reference here to hiring local drivers, is that part of the same discussion that you, the deputy chief of mission, and RSO [REDACTED] had around the March 28 request cable?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And here again, the cable specifically mentions that drivers should be used so that agents could, "solely perform their protective security function." And again, your understanding was so they could free up DS agents so they could focus on other duties. And

that's something you supported; is that right?

A Yes. That's correct.

Q Okay.

Go to the top of the first page now. This is an April 21 email where you appear to comment on the cable. And you stated, "Looks like no new movement on the full complement of five TDY DS personnel for Benghazi, but rather a reassessment to bring numbers lower. We have a second driver candidate coming on this week. We have already hired one."

So, again, this is part of that same conversation, the same discussion of hiring local drivers to free up DS security agents so that they could focus on other tasks; is that right?

A Yes.

Q Okay. How was the issue of the drivers ultimately resolved? Or was the post able to hire any local drivers, to your knowledge?

A Yes. We hired one. Actually, we hired two towards the very end of my time there. I don't think -- and I think one left quite early. He just wasn't a very good driver.

Q Okay. And during this time, did Tripoli also provide drivers for you as well?

A I don't remember.

Q Okay. You mentioned it was towards the end of your tenure. So this is -- we are in late April here. So it sounds like it took around a month or so to hire local drivers; is that --

A Something like that.

Q Okay. Were there challenges with hiring locals to fill those driving positions?

A Yes. It was difficult to find qualified drivers.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 8

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Okay. We will continue to press on here. This is Exhibit 8. Again, I will just briefly describe it.

It this an email that is dated May 11, 2012, from you to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] with the subject, "Re: RSO TDY." The document number is C05409934. It is marked SBU.

A Okay.

Q So an earlier email in the thread here, at the bottom of the first page, is also dated May 11, 2012. Here [REDACTED] [REDACTED] writes to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and cc's you and states the following "[REDACTED], I know you are doing your best to get bodies for Benghazi and I understand and appreciate the difficulties. I have looped [REDACTED] in on the cc line so she is aware of the challenges."

And then the middle of the second page -- this is farther in the email -- it continues, "Bottom line, post could run with one senior minimum FS three with RSO experience and one junior agent, but this would be a strain on all, even with the hiring of two drivers. Three is the ideal number of agents because of the program's workload and

no days off for 45 to 60 days. I am not going to discuss turnover. I will save that for another email."

Just first and real briefly, who is [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]. She was one of the RSOs in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And the recommendation here for three DS agents, was that part of the reassessment the DS IP had requested in that April response cable?

A There was never an official reassessment. This is [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED] working with the idea we would try to emulate working with Tripoli.

Q Okay. And when you say "emulate Tripoli," what do you mean?

A In terms of with the FACT, if you had the FACT, could you be without an RSO escort? I guess that is pretty much the only way in which they meant "emulate Tripoli."

Q So in terms of security procedures, Benghazi was actually more rigorous with that specific point more so than Tripoli?

A It was.

Q Okay. And did you discuss this email at all or this recommendation with Ms. [REDACTED] before you she sent this email?

A I don't remember that.

Q Okay. Did you agree with her assessment at the time that you could run, that the post could run with two DS agents, but that three would be ideal?

A Because we had run with two DS agents, I knew it could be

done, but three would be ideal.

Q Okay. Great. I would like to fast forward now. So in the course of the last hour, we walked through some of the security incidents that occurred while you were in Benghazi. And I believe we were working our way towards the June time period, which it seemed that there are quite a few incidents that occurred then.

I would like to talk specifically -- first, do you recall around June 11 there being an attack on the British Ambassador's convoy?

A Yes.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 9

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So I would like to discuss maybe from that point going forward. In order to do so, I would like to help guide our discussion, we will introduce and mark Exhibit 9. So this is an email dated June 12 from Ambassador Stevens to [REDACTED] and others with the subject, "Re: Following up on U.K. convoy attack." I will just note for the record, you appear on an earlier email on this thread, but not on the subsequent emails. So I will just give you a moment to read.

I would like to begin from the bottom and move up. At the bottom of this email, you write -- and this is on June 11 2012. You emailed [REDACTED] and others and you stated the following, "Benghazi convened an informal EAC," and you name some of the participants there and you continue, "We have suspended movements today/this evening and will also remain on compound tomorrow, Tuesday

June 12. Tomorrow afternoon, we will assess the movements currently planned for Wednesday, June 13."

Just real briefly, for the record, who is [REDACTED]?"

A [REDACTED] was the Maghreb desk director.

Q Okay. And here, you say that post had convened an informal EAC. What is that?

A An EAC is an emergency action committee in which you sit down and sort of discuss the current operating environment.

Q Okay. In this EAC, do you recall specifically what was discussed, what incidents were discussed?

A I don't recall exactly which, but it seems to be right after the attack on the U.K. convoy.

Q Okay. And just what is the general purpose of an EAC? It's to review a security incident and --

A They are held on a regular basis at all missions and then called on -- if there is something that you would like to discuss or assess after a particular incident. So it is the way that you come up with recommendations and then you generally present those recommendations.

Q Okay. And do you recall this particular EAC?

A I do.

Q Moving up the email chain here. And this is, again, June 11, 2012. [REDACTED] forwarded your email to Ambassador Stevens and wrote the following, "Chris, I am getting quite concerned about the security situation for our folks in Benghazi. Maybe we should talk



on the phone tomorrow at your convenience, just informally touch base. We are at a possible natural break in the action coming up, with [REDACTED] leaving. We can bring [REDACTED] and a few others into the conversation at the next stage, but I would like your sense of things first."

At the top of the page -- this is June 12, 2012 -- Ambassador Stevens responded to [REDACTED] and wrote the following "We share your concern. [REDACTED] and I have been discussing recommending a pause in Bgzi PO staffing to further assess the security situation there. As you note below, there is a natural pause coming up in the 2-week gap between [REDACTED] June 14 departure and [REDACTED] anticipated arrival at the end of the month. One idea would be to use this time to allow our RSO team in Benghazi perhaps reduce the number to continue to assess the threat environment and consider ways to mitigate. Those are initial thoughts."

Again, I will note that you are not included on these email threads, but [REDACTED] talks about possibly bringing in a [REDACTED] here into the conversation. And from the context, that appears to be you. Were you eventually brought in into this discussion on whether to reduce the principal officer position temporarily at the Special Mission Compound?

A Yes.

Q Can you describe those conversations?

A I had this conversation with Chris a couple of times, whether we should continue to have a principal officer role in Benghazi, understanding that my successor would be coming in 2 weeks' time. He

suggested that we use this 2 weeks' time to -- without a principal officer, for RSO, that's not having duties to protect me. To have time to take a more -- a deeper, I guess, assessment of the security environment.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Okay. And in the course of your conversations with the Ambassador, did he ask for your opinion or recommendation on whether that PO position should be staffed during that 2-week period?

A He did.

Q Okay. And what was your recommendation?

A My recommendation was that we do as this -- as what was suggested here: If there was a need for a PO to -- or a PO-esque person to come out for some reason, that somebody from Tripoli could do that.

Q Okay. And so, when the Ambassador responds here at the top and he says, "We share your concern," is it your understanding that the "we" there would also include you as well?

A That I'm not sure. I don't know exactly when we had our conversation.

Q Okay. Did you ever take part in the reassessment that occurred later?

A Which --

Q Following the 2-week period.

A No, I did not.

Q Okay. And why -- why not?

A I was back in Washington.

Q Okay. So you departed post around this time. Is that

right? He refers to a June 14 --

A June 14.

Q -- departure date.

Was your departure date -- was that in any way related to the security incidents that happened there or had that been planned in advance?

A No. That had been planned in advance.

Q Okay. And so you don't know or didn't participate in any discussions about whether the PO position should be occupied or filled after that 2-week period. Is that --

A I -- I was.

Q Okay.

A [REDACTED] was coming for, I believe, 2 months and there was -- so -- and that was decided, that he should do so. And, after that, it was -- we didn't have anybody else in line after that, and I wasn't involved in the staffing selections.

Q Was the RSO involved in that discussion about whether the PO position should be -- should be filled?

A I don't remember.

Q Okay. Do you recall who participated in those discussions?

A I just recall talking with Chris about this.

Q Okay. And what was -- did you have a recommendation or an opinion on whether [REDACTED] -- I believe [REDACTED] --

A [REDACTED].

Q -- should come and fill that PO position?

A I thought that he should.

Q Okay. And why -- can you explain why.

A Because I was convinced of the importance of the -- having the principal officer to do the diplomatic work in Benghazi.

Q Okay. Do you recall being briefed at all on the security situation after that 2-week -- or during that 2-week reassessment period?

A I don't recall.

Q Okay. To your knowledge, did the Ambassador ever advocate not continuing to fill the principal officer position?

A Not to me.

Q Okay. Did he ever advocate closing the special mission?

A No. He did not advocate that.

Q Okay. And you say that because you know he didn't?

A He did not advocate that to me.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q And you indicated just a moment ago and had talked a little bit before about the value of the presence in Benghazi, and it sounds like you continued that conversation with the Ambassador on this occasion.

What was -- what was -- what view did he express about the value of having a principal officer present in Benghazi?

A Well, he wanted -- he thought it was important to have a reporting and diplomatic presence in Benghazi. The elections were

upcoming -- the national elections -- and that would be something that the east would be heavily involved with. And so we should be, at that point at least, thinking about that. That was the next thing on the horizon.

Q And that would have been in -- upcoming in July?

A That's correct.

Q And were there any specific examples that you can talk about at least in this setting -- I don't want you to have to go into anything beyond that -- where he had kind of valued the input you had been able to give being on the ground in Benghazi?

A How he had valued the input?

Q Yeah. How it had helped him in terms of his overall view of what was going on in the eastern part of Libya.

A He took my opinion. So that might have informed his --

Q As to the value of --

A Yes.

Q -- continuing? Great. Okay.

Mr. Kenny. Okay. I think that's all for now. So we'll conclude our hour. Go off the record.

[Recess.]

Ms. Clarke. Okay. We're back on the record. And it is 4 minutes after 1:00?

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So thank you, Ms. [REDACTED], again for your time. I just wanted to start with some follow-up questions from the last hour.

I want to start with Exhibit 3, if you still have that with you. We discussed Exhibit 3 previously in the last hour, and I just wanted to talk to you about who you were sending these reports to.

A Okay.

Q So I'd noticed on the "To" line it's SES-O, SWO-Cables, and NEA-MAG-DL.

Can you explain what those groups represent.

A NEA-MAG-DL is the overall distribution list for the Maghreb desk. SES is "senior executive staff." I don't remember what SWO is. But because I didn't have -- these -- it's -- this does -- it's one of the addresses from which cables could be put out.

Q Okay. And then did you typically send cables to each of these groups?

A Yes.

Q During the previous hour of questioning -- or near the beginning of your interview, you mentioned that one of the reasons why Benghazi and eastern Libya was important was because of oil production.

A Uh-huh. Yes.

Q In this Exhibit 3, you also on the second page included information about oil production.

Who -- who was interested in the -- Benghazi's oil production?

A The desk was, as well as Commerce -- Department of Commerce.

Q Okay. Were there any other individuals or any other agencies interested in oil production?

A EB, which is part of -- which is the Economic Bureau of the

State Department. And there were any number, actually, but those come specifically to mind.

Q Okay. Did you report to any individuals about the oil production?

A No. I just sent -- and this particular cable was sent to a very large collective.

Q In any other cables did you report to any individuals?

A What do you mean by "individuals"? Like just one person?

Q Yes.

A I mean, yeah, I did send emails to one -- sometimes to one person or to another person.

Q Okay. Do you --

Ms. Jackson. Actually, let me ask a follow-up.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Was there anybody on the National Security staff that you communicated with regarding events in Libya and in specifically Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q And who was that?

A Ben Fishman.

Q Okay. And approximately how often would you communicate with him?

A I am not sure, but probably once a week at least.

Q And was that by telephone or email?

A By telephone and by email.



Q And approximately how often would you email him?

A That I don't remember.

Q Okay. And what type of information would you send to him?

A The same information that I would send to the State Department. Sometimes -- go ahead.

Q No. No. Go ahead and elaborate.

A Sometimes he would ask me a question, and I would, you know, give him an answer, or ask me to look into something, which was fairly typical.

Q And so would you send him the information that you would send to the senior executive staff at the State Department?

A The senior executive staff would get cables.

Q And cables only?

A This particular collective was for cables. Yeah.

Q Okay. Were there other occasions when you would communicate directly with -- to the senior executive staff?

A No.

Q Okay. And when you weren't sending then to a cable -- you weren't intending it to be a cable, who would you generally communicate with back at Main State?

A With the -- with the Maghreb desk.

Q Okay. During your tenure at -- in Benghazi, did Ben Fishman ever visit?

A No.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. I think that's all the follow-up I have on

that.

Ms. Clarke. Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q I think during our questioning the previous hour we discussed that there was an -- a timeframe when you dropped down to one agent. Correct?

A Yes.

Q And do you recall about when that time -- that occurred?

A I don't remember the exact time, but I think you mentioned late March in our previous conversation. And that sounds about right.

Q Okay. Does March 28 sound -- ring a bell?

A No.

Q But late March does sound about the same -- around the same time?

A Around the same time for what?

Q Around the time that the number of DS agents were reduced to one.

A I'm not sure, but it could be.

Q Okay. All right. So I wanted to take a look again at Exhibit 6.

A Okay. Yes.

Q So Exhibit 6 was discussed during the last hour. And this is a cable regarding requests for DS TDY and FTE support.

And if we could look at the second page and the paragraph that is marked "DS Agent Support in Benghazi," would you read for me that

very first sentence.

A "Post requests continued support for 5 TDY DS agents in Benghazi on 45-60 day rotations."

Q Was it your understanding that posts continued to want at least five agents during your time in Benghazi?

A We did want five agents.

Q And were -- and were five agents ever supplied?

A No. Not at one time.

Q We talked -- discussed earlier that, at some times, there were up to three DS agents and that -- and that there never -- there was never more than three DS agents. Is that correct?

A That's correct.

Q And so we were looking at some other exhibits during the last hour. And we'll take a look at Exhibit 4.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And just to focus on the first page of the email that you sent regarding some of the edits, in the first bullet point, the second sentence says, "The status quo has been 3. Is it safe/reasonable to assume that 3 will remain the number we can expect?"

What did you mean by that? Were you requesting that three become the number of DS agents or were you basing this off of your experience?

A This was based off of my experience.

Q Were you satisfied with that number?

A We had continually requested five.

Q And so that -- so, because you continually requested five,

that indicated that you were not satisfied with three?

A I wanted the full complement for RSOs -- for RSOs advice.

Q Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And then, going back, if I can, to Exhibit 6, the cable that's dated March 28 -- so would have been, I think, 3 days after the Exhibit 4 email of March 25 -- on page 2, again under the paragraph that says "DS Agent Support in Benghazi," the request was for a minimum of five agents at all times?

A I don't see that here.

Q The very first sentence.

A "Post requests" -- oh, that -- well, yes, "continued support for 5."

Q Okay. And then as I -- and I want your assessment --

A Sure.

Q -- of this paragraph.

But my reading of this paragraph was that there was a request for even more than five agents in the run-up to the elections and that Tripoli was going to send one and then and only then would you go back down to the five.

Am I reading that correctly or am I reading that incorrectly?

A Let me -- let me just take a look at this.

Q Sure. Just take your time and read that paragraph.

A Okay.

Q Okay. Having read the paragraph --

A Yes.

Q -- how -- can you give us what you believe this paragraph is asking for.

A It's asking for continued support for five. And it states that we would anticipate that, in the run-up to the elections, in which we would -- were expecting a lot of visitors to come observe, that we would need more.

Q Okay. But five was going -- was what post was requesting as the steady state?

A That's correct.

Q Okay. I also notice in that first sentence that it says that they wanted five TDY DS agents on 45- to 60-day rotations. Do you see that?

A Yes.

Q It's our understanding that DS agents were on 30- to 45-day rotations.

Was this a request for an increased duration of the rotation?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And why was that important?

A I thought that it was important because it's good to have continuity and continued presence --

Q Okay.

A -- I would say, I felt for myself as well.

Q Would it also help alleviate some of the visa issues that you were experiencing?

A It probably would.

Q Okay. Would it help in the supervision of the local guard force and the QRF forces?

A To -- increasing to five or having five?

Q The longer duration, the actual --

A Longer duration.

Q Well, let me ask both.

Both the number and the duration, did that have any impact on the supervision of the local guard force or the QRF?

A That I don't know.

Q Okay. What other benefits would there be from longer durations, if there were?

A It's best to be able to have as much time in country as possible so that you understand things.

Q Okay. So would it help with the overall security?

A It would help have a more nuanced understanding of it.

Q Okay. Would it -- would having the full complement of five DS agents have improved your ability and subsequent political officers to have greater movements within and around Benghazi?

A It would have.

Q Okay. So to the extent that reporting about Benghazi was important, having more agents would have enabled you to do your job better or at least more efficiently and --

A I would have had -- I wouldn't say better. I think I did a pretty good job. But -- but it would have -- more DAs would have

enabled more movements.

Ms. Jackson. Those are all the follow-up questions I have.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q I think in the first hour we discussed -- we may have mentioned that you were aware of other Americans in Benghazi. Is that correct?

A That's correct.

Q And could you tell us who -- who -- who were you aware of or who were those Americans?

Mr. Evers. If you can answer it in an unclassified setting, please do so.

Ms. [REDACTED]. I can answer part of that in unclass and part of that in classified.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Okay.

A There were American teachers at the American school -- not the American school -- sorry -- the International School. There was an American who was running a large wheat farm, any number of dual Libyan-American citizens.

American journalists were -- passed through from time to time. American election observers would come through from time to time. And there were American -- Americans at the U.N., I think -- actually, I'm not sure of that.

Q And how were you -- did you become aware of these individuals?

A I knew about the Americans at the International School because I went to visit it. And I knew about the journalists because they would call me when they came through to get sort of a readout.

The American fellow who ran the farm was a longstanding contact of the -- of the mission. So many of these were people that previous principal officers had also known.

Q One other area that we talked about and I wanted to flesh out a little more was we talked about that you were aware that there are -- that there are certain OBO standards that applied to -- to embassies or to consulates --

A Uh-huh.

Q -- but that you hadn't discussed those standards.

Did you discuss -- what, if anything, did you discuss regarding the overall security of the compound with the DS agent or the RSO?

A I listened to them when they wanted to talk about it. I didn't raise, per se, concerns of my own. Again, I deferred to the RSO on what they deemed to be appropriate or what we should do.

Q And do you recall what some of those concerns were?

A Well, we asked for concertina wire and a higher perimeter wall, which we received. I don't recall any more specific concerns that they expressed to me. There may have been. I just don't recall.

Q Okay. You also mentioned that [REDACTED], who was the RSO in Tripoli, and so kind of over the overall R -- he was the overall RSO for Libya. Is that correct? --

A That's right.



Q -- that he came to Benghazi on two occasions.

Did he -- did he have any recommendations or did he ever discuss with you any recommendations that he had regarding the security in Benghazi?

A He recommended the -- the raising of the heights of the perimeter walls and the additional sandbags. And that's -- those for sure he recommended.

Q Okay. And did he have --

Ms. Jackson. Go ahead.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Did he have any recommendations or did he note any deficiencies with the local guard force?

A Did he know of deficiencies?

Q Did he note. Did he express --

A Oh. Note.

Q -- to you any concerns or deficiencies that he noted regarding the local guard force?

A Not that I remember.

Q What about the QRF or the Feb 17th individuals that were assigned to the compound?

A Nothing specific. No. Not that I remember.

Q When we were discussing the local guard force earlier -- or the security assets that were on compound earlier, you mentioned that they appreciated training.

And I just wanted to clarify. Who were you referring to when you

say they appreciated the training of the RSO?

A The RSOs would do training drills with the QRF, who were resident on compound, which they appreciated and was fun.

And the RSO also ran drills with the local guard force in terms of what to do when a duck-and-cover sounded or how to screen a car when a car would come through the gates.

Q What prompted the RSO to run the drills with the QRF and the local guard force?

A We had ample time on our hands, and they wanted to make sure that they were as trained up as possible.

Q Did they -- did the RSO ever discuss with you noticing any deficiencies in the -- their performance that would encourage him to conduct these drills?

A Sometimes the guard force would come late. And so the RSO would, you know, reprimand tardiness. So nothing else of particular I can remember that being a declared deficiency about -- about the force -- the contracted force.

Q Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q If I can ask a follow-up to that.

You've been at several overseas posts in high-threat areas.

A Yes.

Q What was your assessment as to the quality of both the local guard force and the QRF in Benghazi compared to other places you've been that have been high-threat posts?

A Well, in Darfur, I had zero security. So that was already an improvement. And, in Pakistan, we had a -- I did not participate in the hiring of -- these are -- sorry. In Pakistan, the constabulary assigned them to us. So they chose who they wanted.

In terms of -- in terms of -- you know, in terms of enthusiasm and, you know, desire to perform the job, I was -- I would say I was -- I was satisfied with what I had in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And back to [REDACTED] and the -- during his visits to Benghazi, did he express to you whether he was satisfied with their overall competence or whether -- you know, did he make any recommendations of additional training or anything like that?

A He did make recommendations for training that could be done in Tripoli, where they had more available resources to conduct it.

Q And what type of training would that be?

A Just the training that they gave to their own -- their own local guard force.

Q Was that the QRF or the local guard force or both?

A The QRF in Tripoli [REDACTED].

Q Okay.

A So it was local guards.

Q Okay. And, if you know, how did you get February 17th as your QRF?

A They were assigned to us before I came. So I don't --

Q Okay.

A -- I really don't know the procedure by which they were

selected.

Q Is it your understanding they were given to you by the transitional government in --

A As part of the government, they would have been -- I wouldn't say given to us, but they were part of the transitional government.

Q Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q In the last hour, you were discussing the security profile and you made the comment -- and correct me if I'm quoting you wrong -- but you were discussing whether countries had concerns about hardening, [REDACTED].

What did you mean by that expression?

A [REDACTED] It's just not really in their -- overseas, in other countries as well, it's just not their -- it's not how they -- it's not how they conduct their own security.

Q And you came to that assessment through your experience -- other experiences at other posts?

A Yes.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q One other area that was touched upon in the last hour was that -- was the movement to locally employed drivers.

A Yes.

Q And I believe you said that you had hired two.

One did not last long because he couldn't really drive?

A Yes.

Q To be a locally employed driver for U.S. diplomatic personnel, is it enough just to have a driver's license or is there any type of specialized training such as counter-tactics and things like that that the drivers must have in order to be sufficient in State Department's mind?

A No. Driver's license and passing a background check.

Q Okay. Then, once hired, do they undergo any type of specialized training before they are allowed to drive U.S. government personnel?

A The RSOs would drive with -- the one that lasted with us, drive with him to just gauge his driving skills, give him pointers on -- on, you know, the Americans, we don't like to speed, we actually pay attention to the stop signs. So it was honestly things like that.

Q So that they don't have shrieking Americans in the backseat?

A Yes. I'm not a shrieker, but somebody else may have been.

Q Are you a clutcher of the handrails and the --

A No.

Q -- sides of the car?

A I'm not always so uncomfortable.

Q Okay. But the RSO would have to approve the person and their driving skills before they would be allowed to transport U.S. government personnel?

A Yes, they would.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So when we concluded our last hour, we were just walking through some of the security incidents that occurred during your time in Benghazi. So I wanted to return to that.

A Sure.

Q I think the last one that we discussed was the May 28 attack on the -- in the National Red Cross facility.

A Uh-huh. Yes.

Q The next one I wanted to discuss is on June -- the June 6 IED compound -- IED blast at the compound. Do you recall that?

A I do.

Q Or at the special mission facility.

Can you detail what you recall.

A I was awakened at around 3:00 or so by a duck-and-cover that had been activated by the local guard force, who had seen suspicious activity.

And so I did follow the protocols for that, which was to make sure I had my radio, put me Kevlar on, and secure the living quarters of the villa, and then wait for instructions from RSO as to what to do.

Q Okay. And --

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q When you say they saw suspicious activity, did they -- did you learn what that was after the fact?

A Yes. I'm sorry. They saw an individual, they thought, who was placing some kind of a suspicious package at the -- near the -- near

the gate.

Q And so the local guard force was trained that, if they saw anything suspicious in or around the compound, that they immediately hit the duck-and-cover?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q And can you tell us, how did that situation resolve? What -- was there damage that was caused by the blast?

A Yes, there was.

Q And what was that damage?

A There was a hole that was a hole in the perimeter wall.

Q And what -- can you describe about how -- the size of that hole.

A I would say about 6 feet by 4 feet.

Q Okay. So a pretty large hole.

And any other damages caused to the facility?

A There was some charring of some of the trees out in front of the compound. But to the physical compound, that was the only damage.

Q What did -- what, if any, actions were taken by you or the RSO in response to that event?

A I waited for the RS -- do you mean what did I do during the course of the night?

Q No. Once the situation had resolved itself as far as being

secured, I don't know if you would have done it the next day or that evening, but did you make any changes to movements or did you request any additional security?

A We certainly cancelled movements that day. We got a contractor to come in as quickly as possible to start to fix the wall. Let me just think for a minute.

I had called the local security -- Libyan security folks when it happened to alert them that something had happened, and RSO went through their channels with Diplomatic Security alert, letting them know what had happened and what we were doing.

In the morning, the contractor came and began to repair the wall, and members of the -- the security -- local security services also stopped by to -- to see what had happened.

Q Is the local security services -- is that the same as the Supreme Security Council?

A That's correct.

Q Do you recall asking -- or the RSO asking for night patrols by the Supreme Security Council?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And were those patrols in place when this event happened or did this event prompt those patrols?

A I had requested those prior to this.

Q Do you recall what prompted you to request those?

A I don't. I'm sorry.

Q Okay. Do you recall how -- how -- the timeframe in advance



of the -- how long in advance before this event happened that you requested those?

A I believe about a week.

Q Okay. And were they granted?

A I did see additional patrols. Yes. So they adhered to my request.

Q Do you recall a June 8 rally in downtown Benghazi that may have been termed as an Islamist rally where different members of Islamist militia members rallied and there was a show of arms and banners and flags were flown?

A Yes. I remember that.

Q What do you recall about that?

A I recall that it was -- took place in downtown. I certainly didn't go down to visit it myself. And it was -- lasted for about a day. I -- that's -- I didn't -- I didn't see it.

Q Okay.

A I just knew it was taking place.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did you have any advanced notice that there was going to be a rally that day?

A I did not.

Q And do you recall approximately how many individuals participated in the rally?

A I believe I reported that there were maybe up to 100 trucks. And so I'm not sure how many people were on top of each of those trucks

or in those trucks.

Q And can you describe the trucks.

A Well, I didn't see them. But they were --

Q Right.

A -- they were told to me to be pickup trucks, I mean, pickups.

Q Were they armed in any way?

A They were.

Q Okay. And what were they armed with?

A That I -- that I don't remember. I don't.

Q Was there a name in Libya that these trucks were called?

A If there was and I forgot, I'm really embarrassed.

Q Does the word "technicals" --

A Technicals. Thank you. That does make sense.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Okay. I'm going to show you what has been marked as Exhibit 10.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 10

Was marked for identification.]

A Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So this is a document -- it's an email, a "Benghazi Situation Report," June 8, 2012, Document Number 05391489, and you are not -- it does not appear that you were emailed on this or that you sent this sit report.

Had you seen this before?

A I wrote this.

Q Okay. And can you explain -- you wrote this.

Did you send this to -- do you recall if you sent that to the individual, [REDACTED]?

A I don't recall him. I mean, I did send it. And this may be him forwarding it to somebody else.

Q Okay. And is this discuss -- regarding the event that we were just discussing?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Who would you have sent this to?

A I would have sent this to the normal collective that we've seen on some of the previous things that I had sent, the Maghreb desk, the Tripoli -- there was a -- what I had -- the email address was probably very similar to the -- one of these other exhibits that had that.

Q Would you have sent it to the State Department senior executives?

A This did not go out as a cable. So no.

Q Okay. But then -- so on the one where we saw the cable, there was a long list of people --

A Yes.

Q -- on the cc --

A Yeah.

Q -- or generally referring to those people?

A Exactly.

Q Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Now -- so you said that you wrote this. I wanted to look at the third paragraph. And in there the second sentence begins with "Comment," and it says, "There was very little advance notice of the rally, and post contacts from across the spectrum expressed shock and outrage that such a large demonstration could take place without the government's knowledge. This is the first such demonstration of Islamist groups in Benghazi since the revolution, if ever."

Did you write this comment?

A I did.

Q And can you explain more what -- what you were trying to convey in this comment.

A Let me just read it again.

I was conveying the uniqueness of this incident, that it had not happened before.

Q And you said that "post -- post contacts from across the spectrum expressed shock and outrage" about this demonstration.

Do you recall what prompted -- what you were referring to?

A Just -- can you ask -- I'm not quite sure I understood that.

Q It seems to indicate that the contacts that you had with other individuals -- or the post contacts were shocked and outraged that this would happen and the government didn't know about it.

Do you -- do you recall having that discussion with anyone?

A I do.

Q Okay. And can you elaborate on that.

A There was -- a number of the contacts that I had were shocked and outraged that there was little advance notice of this. It was unexpected, and the government was not aware.

Q Did they expect that the government would be aware of incidences such as this?

A I don't know.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q In that same sentence, it says "post contacts from across the spectrum."

Who does that entail?

A Oh. That would be federalists. That would be secularists. Basically, the range of contacts -- teachers, politicals, et cetera -- that I had contact with.

Q But, generally, Libyans?

A Libyans.

Q Okay.

A Yes.

Q Would it include the other western countries that had a presence in there or are you referring to the Libyan contacts?

A Here I'm referring to the Libyans.

Q Okay.

A Yes.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Was it surprising to you to have such -- in the first paragraph, you call this an "unprecedented show of force."

Was that surprising to you, to have this show of force by Islamist militia members?

A It was.

Q And why was that surprising?

A I had never seen it before.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did you have any concerns about Islamist extremists being in the area?

A We knew that there were.

Q Okay. In and around Benghazi?

A In and around Derna.

Q And approximately how far is that from Benghazi?

A That's -- it's about a 4 -- 4-1/2-half-hour drive.

Q Let me ask one final question regarding Exhibit 10.

A Sure.

Q This represents your thinking and beliefs exactly at the time and, so, would be the best recollection of what happened back then?

A Yeah. This is -- this is exact -- this would be an accurate reflection of what I thought at the time.

Q Okay.

A Yes.

Q All right. Thank you.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So I think in the last hour we touched on the -- that there was an attack on the U.K. envoy.

A Yes.

Q Can you --

A The U.N. or the U.K.?

Q The U.K. Ambassador.

A Yes.

Q In June. It was around the middle of June.

A Yes. That's correct.

Q Can you elaborate what you recall about that?

A I recall I was not there, that his car or convoy -- I -- one or two cars were hit by -- by something, whether an IED or a grenade -- unsure -- and that there was damage to the car, a couple of his guards or drivers had injuries, and -- but that he was -- that he was fine.

Q Do you recall whether the perpetrators of that attack were ever determined?

A No.

Q Okay. What about the -- was it ever determined who -- who -- the IED blast on June 6, was there ever any perpetrators that were identified for that blast on the compound?

A No. There was an investigation opened at my request. Well, I mean, I -- I didn't need to request it. And -- but, by the time that I had left a few weeks later, nobody had been taken into

custody.

Q Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Were there suspects identified?

A We had a video, and there was a man who was seen in the video laying an object down. And so he was the main suspect.

Q But he was not identifiable by any of the local guard force or the QRF or the DS agents?

A Not that I remember.

Q Okay. The same with the attackers of the British Ambassador. Were there ever suspects identified or did any group ever claim responsibility?

A No suspects were identified. I don't remember if a group claimed responsibility.

Q Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Other than the security incidents that we've discussed, do you recall any other incidents that occurred during your time in Benghazi?

A What kind of incidents?

Q Similar incidents, whether it's on the -- attacks at the compound or whether there were other western entities that may have experienced some type of violence towards them.

A Let me think. You know, I think we've talked about all of the ones that I can remember --



Q Okay.

A -- or that took -- that I remember taking place while I was there.

Q Okay. Do you recall, did Benghazi have tripwires? And are you familiar with what a tripwire is?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And did Benghazi have those?

A We did.

Q Okay. Do you recall whether there was any -- in any of the incidents that we've discussed, did any of those trigger -- or cross a tripwire?

A I don't remember what the exact tripwires were, and they changed from time to time. So I -- I couldn't say.

Q Were the tripwires in a written document?

A They normally are. Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall if there is one for Benghazi?

A There was one in Tripoli that included Benghazi.

Q Okay. Do you know what prompted the tripwires to -- to change from time to time?

A That's normal procedure in any post overseas. You assess if you have a lesser threat. Higher threats, you change your tripwires to -- to reflect that.

Q Okay. Would you have been a part of those discussions to change tripwires?

A Yes.

Q When you had discussions about the tripwires, was that one that was a discussion with just individuals in Benghazi or did that include individuals in Tripoli?

A When we discussed Benghazi tripwires, we discussed it first in Benghazi and then conveyed our recommendations to Tripoli.

Q I'm going to show you -- I'm going to mark Exhibit 11. I think that's where we are.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 11

Was marked for identification.]

A Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q And this is a -- this is an email. It's an unclassified email -- sensitive, but unclassified. The doc number is 05391161. And it's from [REDACTED].

I think his name has come up before. But can you just remind me who he is.

A Sure. He was the DS liaison in Washington.

Q And then it's to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

A Yeah. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

Q Okay. And who are those individuals?

A RSOs.

Q Okay. That were in Benghazi at the time?

A [REDACTED] was in Benghazi. I don't think I was there with [REDACTED].

Q Okay.

A [REDACTED] was in Tripoli. That's why.

Q Gotcha. Okay.

And the date of this email is June 11. You were still in Benghazi at that time?

A That's correct. Yes.

Q And the email -- the "Subject" is "DS/IP recommends your request a combined EAC."

Is the EAC an emergency action committee?

A Yes.

Q And how was that structured? Who was involved in the EAC?

A That depends on post to post. But, generally, in our case, it would be the principal officer, the RSO. But we were such a small post, it was everybody, basically. And -- and then we could talk about more in a classified setting.

Q Okay. And do you recall -- you were not on this email.

A No.

Q But do you recall convening an EAC in response to this email?

A I recognize these tripwires. I do not recall holding one. No. I don't recall holding one.

Q Okay. Do you recall ever holding an emergency -- an EAC regarding whether or not any of the events that we just walked through -- the security incidents -- triggered or tripped any of the tripwires?

A We had a few EAC conversations or meetings when I was there, and we certainly discussed tripwires and -- and other -- you know, the

security assessment, essentially. But we did not make a recommendation that we depart.

Q Okay. And do you recall why you did not make that recommendation?

A We did not think that we had met the threshold of -- of departure.

Q Did you make any recommendations for additional security in response?

A Without the notes of the EAC, I can't remember. I'm sorry.

Q So are each of the EACs captured in some type of document?

A Generally, an email at least.

Q Okay. And who's responsible -- generally responsible for drafting that email?

A We -- I'll take the first stab or -- and then have RSO make their contributions, and then they will send it through their email.

Q Okay. And do you know who it's usually sent to?

A The Embassy would get it, the -- the desk -- the Maghreb desk would get it, and the DS, different collectives, would get it.

Q Do you recall consulting -- after having these EACs that you talked about, do you recall consulting other embassies regarding their plans?

A We talked with the U.K. often about -- about their own security posture and what they were doing.

Q Okay. Did you ever specifically request additional Diplomatic Security, TDY personnel, as a result of any of the EACs that

you convened?

A We didn't request them, I think, as a result of the EACs. We requested to have the threshold of five.

Q Okay. You mentioned that you consulted often with the Brits about what they were going to do.

And at some point during your tenure, did the Brits ask to store vehicles and other supplies at the compound?

A Yes.

Q And did you -- can you tell -- tell us more about that.

A They were vacating their space and not replacing my counterpart there for resource issues. So they anticipated coming to Benghazi. As they wouldn't have a physical space anymore, they still wanted to have access to their -- their vehicles.

And so, as a -- you know, the U.K. and the U.S. have a very special relationship. And so we, making sure it was legal, agreed to have their vehicles on our compound.

Q And why -- why were they -- why did the Brits decide not to continue your counterpart's position?

A [REDACTED] had -- [REDACTED] had left. He was my counterpart. They brought in a -- a Brit, but not a -- he was basically a locally employed staff -- to serve in his place. And it was too expensive for them to maintain the villa that they had.

Q Do you know any details about what made it too expensive to maintain the villa?

A I don't. I mean, the local economy charged exorbitant

prices for these villas because they knew that they could. And [REDACTED] replacement, being a locally employed, had his own apartment. So they didn't really need it any longer.

Q What --

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did the attack on the Ambassador's convoy play any role -- any part in their decision to leave Benghazi?

A [REDACTED] had already -- [REDACTED] had already left, and [REDACTED] was already there. So -- so, no, I don't think so.

Q And [REDACTED] was the one that was attacked?

A No. That would be the Ambassador. [REDACTED] was my counterpart --

Q Okay.

A -- that departed.

Q Okay. All right. Could you go over that --

A Sure.

Q -- one more time.

A Sure. Okay.

Q They had both a principal officer and an Ambassador?

A The Ambassador was resident in Tripoli and the principal officer in Benghazi.

Q Okay.

A He -- my counterpart, their version of Foreign Service, he had departed and was -- his replacement was locally hired.

Q So it was the Ambassador visiting from Tripoli who was

attacked --

A Exactly.

Q -- not your counterpart in Benghazi?

A Exactly.

Q Okay. Now I do understand. Thank you.

Was it well known that the Ambassador was visiting Libya when that attack occurred?

A The British Ambassador?

Q Yes.

A Well, he was resident in Libya.

Ms. Clarke. Benghazi.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q I'm sorry. When -- I'm sorry. I said that wrong.

Was the U.K. Ambassador's visit to Benghazi known publicly?

A No. Not -- they had -- there hadn't been any official -- how do you say -- any official --

Q Announcement?

A -- announcement that he was coming. No. I knew he was coming because my counterparts wanted us to meet.

Q And when he was in Benghazi, had he had any public meetings, if you recall?

A He had had meetings. I don't remember if they were public.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Do you recall whether the vehicles were still stored at the compound during this timeframe when -- during the -- around June 11,

when the U.K. Ambassador was attacked?

A Yes. They were on our compound.

Q And during his visit to Benghazi, did they retrieve some of --

A Yes.

Q -- those vehicles to use them?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And was that common knowledge, that -- that the U.K. stored vehicles at the compound?

A The only knowledge would have been between our two Ambassadors in Tripoli who had signed sort of the -- the agreement to do so. So, no, we never notified anyone in any way.

Q What was the evacuation plan for Benghazi during your time there?

A There were two proposed routes. One would be by land to Egypt, and another would be by air to Tripoli.

Q And can you tell us, were there circumstances that would have prevented one route being used versus the other?

A I think it would just depend on the time. It would be faster to drive to Egypt if -- it would be faster to drive to Egypt than to drive to Tripoli. It would be easier to fly to Tripoli than to fly into Egypt.

Q And when you -- when you say fly by air to Tripoli was one of the evac plans, what -- was there a dedicated plane or what type of resources did you have?



A There was commercial air on the ground, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Q And do you know, had you -- or were you aware of anyone that discussed your proposed evac plan to Egypt with the Ambassador to Egypt or with the Embassy in Egypt?

A They knew that they were a point of haven for us. I don't know how much discussion actually had gone into. Something like this is not normally very formal.

Q Okay. Did you participate in or were you asked to prepare any security -- security environment or threat assessments of Benghazi and surrounding areas?

A I did not do those. No. I was not asked to do those.

Q Did you ever request that those be prepared?

A Do you mean like a formal assessment or --

Q Formal or informal.

A No. I don't think that I did.

Q I think we touched on this earlier, that you traveled to Derna at some point.

A I did.

Q And what was the purpose of that trip?

A I was making a contact with different local councils in the -- in the drive-up to the -- to the -- to the municipal as well as national elections.

So that's what -- I met with -- I met with the local council members and other political figures from -- the governor, I think, as

well while I was there.

Q Were the municipal elections all held on the same day? So, like, if you had elections in Derna, were they going to be held the same day in --

A No. It would be different.

Q Okay. You mentioned earlier that it was known that there were Islamic extremists or militias in Derna.

A Uh-huh.

Q Did that -- did you become aware of that factor in your trip or was that something that you knew of before?

A I already knew.

Q Okay. And during your trip, was that something that you explored?

A Did I go visit them?

Q Or that -- did you gather more information about those militia groups?

A No. I did not.

Q Okay. Had that been reported back to D.C., the fact that there were known militia groups in Derna?

A Yes. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Were there others who explored the issue of the extent and nature of Islamic extremists in Derna during your trip?

Ms. [REDACTED]. Yes.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So we went through a list of incidents, and it appeared that

the incidents -- well, first, let me ask you this: Were you aware of security incidents that occurred during the time that your predecessors were there, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]?

A We had many conversations. I don't remember a particular security incident that they -- that they shared with me.

Q So did you get a sense that, during your tenure in Benghazi, that security incidents were happening more -- happening more often than occurred during their time?

A Since I don't know exactly what happened there, it does seem that there were more security incidences in the spring.

Q And then the types of security incidents that happened during your tenure, did you -- it seemed that the -- that they began to intensify or started with a gelatina blast and ended with an attack on the British Ambassador's convoy.

A Uh-huh.

[2:21 p.m.]

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Do you agree with that assessment?

A I think that the security situation certainly deteriorated during that time. I couldn't say which one was more sort of important or, you know, harmful than another. There was an increase in security incidents.

Q Did you have any assessment about what was prompting the increase in security incidents?

A You mean did I have any knowledge about who might be acting?

Q That or -- who might be acting or what was the impetus for the increase -- or the deteriorating security environment?

A No. I mean, that was really -- that was actually a part of my job, was to be in eastern Libya to report in a very uncertain environment -- I mean, the entire country was -- and to try to make these determinations as to who had interests in what area and who had interests in other areas. So I didn't have any hard facts. What I was trying to do was just to learn.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Did you see any change in the ability of the local government or the transitional government's ability to rein in these attacks and/or respond to these attacks?

A All of the attacks were investigated to some degree or another by the local securities. As far as how they were litigated or what the outcomes were, that I don't know.

Q Did you see any change in the nature, strength, or capability of those resources? I mean, did the local police department get better? Did they get worse? Was it stagnant or stable during your time? Do you have any assessment of that?

A I didn't deal with the police very much at all. So more with the Supreme Security Council, which became more cohesive during the time that I was there. But certainly the situation was uncertain and there was wide recognition of that and we were trying to work with them to advance their own capacities as well as -- I mean, a stable Libya is good for everybody.

Q Did the RSOs or other DS agents who were assigned in Benghazi, would they have separate meetings to work with the local police?

A Yes.

Q Supreme Security Council too?

A They had meetings with them on occasion without me, yes.

Q Okay. And the same with the various militias, including Feb 17?

A Yes.

Q And that was part of their role and responsibility of being in country?

A Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Can we go off the record for just a few minutes?

[Recess.]

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So just a few more follow-up questions. We talked about your knowledge of Americans who were in Libya. Were you aware of any contractors, State Department contractors in Libya?

A State Department contractors in Libya or in the east?

Q In Libya or in the east.

A NGOs were contracted by MEPI or USAID to be implementing partners, yeah.

Ms. Jackson. And approximately how many and what were they doing?

Ms. [REDACTED]. I don't know the actual numbers, but they would be doing things like prepping for elections, increasing civil society participation in the election process, advocating for more participation by women in the political process. Democracy -- mostly democracy related.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Following your tenure, were you ever asked to gather documents related to the attack that occurred on the Special Mission Compound in Benghazi?

A Documents, my own emails or --

Q Your own emails. As a State Department employee, were you requested by anyone at State to gather documents?

A Yeah, there was a concerted effort to gather documents when they were requested at the State Department, and so I provided those documents or I provided what I had.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Was that in response to the Accountability Review Board being implemented, congressional requests, both, one or the other?

A Both.

Q Do you recall getting two separate requests?

A No. I got one request.

Q Okay. And do you know approximately when that was?

A It was in that fall, the fall of 2012, but I don't remember exactly what the date was.

Q And can you describe for us the steps you took to try and identify relevant documents?

A I went through my old emails and whatever I had on disk, and I just gave everything.

Q Okay. How did you search your old emails? Did you --

A Well, all my emails up to a certain time were only in Benghazi, so I just sent the whole stack of what I had when I was -- basically from early March to the day I left.

Q So for that timeframe you just collected everything and shipped them off?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what about documents? How did you search for relevant documents outside of emails?

A Oh, outside of emails. I didn't have access really to other documents. We didn't print classified material in Benghazi, so I didn't have any of that. It was basically just emails.

Q So any document that you would have created while you were in Benghazi would have been attached to an email in some way? Or how did you keep documents that you created in Benghazi?

A I see what you mean. I did mostly everything on email. It just was so much easier that way. I wrote my reports directly on email and sent them. So I didn't really create of my own documents that I would save on the server, for example.

Q I was thinking like a tripwires document or an evacuation plan or visitor policy?

A Those I didn't have on my shared drive since I didn't create them. My own personal was pretty much always either phone or email.

Q Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Were you aware of any programs to collect MANPADS during your time in Benghazi?

A I can't talk about that here.

Q Okay. So those are all of our questions. Are there any answers that you would like to elaborate further on?

A I think Ajdabiya was the right one versus Beyda, thank you. And no.

Q Okay. And then any area that you thought we would have asked about but hadn't and that you would like to share?



A No. I could expect that you would ask me about the security incidents.

Ms. Clarke. Well, that's all of the questions we have. We can go off the record.

Mr. Kenny. Let's take a couple-minute break.

[Recess.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], just to provide a bit of an overview, it may feel like we're going to jump around a bit here, so I'm going to ask a few follow-up questions from some of the topics that were discussed or raised during the last hour. May shift around. Do our best to let you know when we do that so it'll be easier for you to follow as well.

I'd like to begin first by referring back to [REDACTED] Exhibit 6. So this is the cable "12 Tripoli 130." I'd just like to clear up what appears to be some confusion on the intent or the meaning of some of the words or the usage of words here.

So in the last hour -- well, we can go ahead and just read this. And actually I think we will try to unpack a little bit. So the paragraph entitled "DS Agent Support in Benghazi" reads, quote, "Post requests continued support for 5 TDY DS agents in Benghazi on 45-60 day rotations. This number is required to ensure that we have an appropriate USDH presence to protect our COMSEC; support the two long-term USDH TDY'ers; and support an increasing number of program/assistance TDY's from both Tripoli and Washington. The number of TDY'ers in Benghazi is expected to increase in the run-up to the

June elections," close quote.

So in the last hour there seemed to be some confusion over this last sentence --

A Okay.

Q -- which refers to the number of TDYers increasing.

A Uh-huh.

Q I would just like to, again, ask for your clarification here to the extent you understand or your impression of this, but the sentence before this sentence refers to program/assistance TDYs. Can I ask, in your view, was that related to DS? Were those DS TDY assets or were those programming?

A Let me look.

Q Sure.

A Programming.

Q Okay. So when you say programming, does that refer to something different from diplomatic security?

A Yes, this would refer to people who might want to come monitor the elections or to watch the procedure.

Q Okay. And in the runup to the elections, were you expecting other TDYers, programming TDYers to come to Benghazi?

A There were a number of requests to do so.

Q Okay. And so then the following sentence, which says the number of TDYers is expected to increase, is it your understanding that that meant that the number of programming TDYers was going to increase or that the DS would increase in excess of the five DS agents originally

requested? Or if you think it's unclear --

A Say it again.

Q Sure. Just based on your understanding that the request for programming TDYers to come to Benghazi in the runup to the elections, I would just like to ask for your understanding of this sentence that reads, "The number of TDY'ers in Benghazi is expected to increase in the run-up to the June election," and ask you whether the TDYers in that sentence, in your view, refers to diplomatic security TDY or if it refers to programming and the assistance TDYers?

A Program and assistance TDY.

Q Okay. So not diplomatic security?

A No.

Q Okay. So is there anything in this paragraph that would suggest that the post is requesting more than five DS agents?

A No.

Q Okay. Thank you. I think that's a helpful clarification.

I would like to move on. So in the last hour we had a discussion about the June 6 IED attack against the Special Mission Compound. You provided for us your recollection of those events, and that was very helpful. You also talked a little bit about what you did in the aftermath of that attack. Do you recall at the time how the LGF responded, how the local guard force responded?

A The local guard force responded by sounding the duck and cover.

Q Okay. And that was before --

A Oh, I'm sorry, I was thinking about -- June 6. I was mistaken, I was thinking of the previous incident. LGF on June 6. No, no, I'm sorry. I'm tired. Yes, they sounded the duck and cover.

Q Okay. So they did that immediately preceding the explosion. Is that your recollection?

A That's right.

Q Okay. I would like to also talk about the QRF, the 17th February Martyrs Brigade. How did they respond?

A There were the four with us on compound that evening, and they were with RSO during the RSO's kind of, what do you call it, examining what was going on. I didn't see their interactions together because I was still in my locked environment.

Q Okay. About how long were you in your locked environment or your safe haven?

A I think about 30 minutes.

Q Thirty minutes, okay.

A Uh-huh.

Q When you emerged from that, was there an increased security presence on the compound or around the compound?

A Well, [REDACTED], and it had attracted a number -- it had attracted a lot of attention. So I don't know what kind of security was there, but there were more men.

Q Okay. Is it your understanding that the QRF on compound were able to summon assistance from their brigade off compound?

A That's what I was told.

Q Okay. But you don't have personal knowledge of that?

A No, this is what I was told.

Q Okay, thank you, that's helpful.

Was there also an information management officer on the compound at this time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did he have any role in responding in the aftermath, so maybe not immediately after, but in perhaps the hours and days afterwards, to the best of your recollection?

A Right. I think he -- it was [REDACTED] -- I think he ensured that our communications weren't tampered -- not tampered with -- weren't affected. And he was the one who would contract out for -- who would do the contracting to get the wall repaired and to do whatever other contracting responsibilities there were to fix the damage.

Q Okay. So he was responsible for interacting with the contractors to repair the wall?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you have a sense of how quickly the contractor was able to respond?

A They came that morning, the same day.

Q They came the same day, okay. Were they able to perform work in short order?

A Yes, I believe it was finished by the following day.

Q Okay. And when you say finished --

A The wall was restored.

Q Okay. So the wall was completely repaired within -- you said by the end of the second day, so within 48 hours?

A Yes. Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall at this time or around this time post receiving any outside assistance from American security, physical security specialists?

A [REDACTED].

Q Okay. Do you recall if anybody was dispatched from other posts in the region, perhaps security engineers, people who would --

A There were at times while I was there, but I don't recall if they came after this particular incident.

Q Okay. Was your sense that post was receiving sufficient support from Main State or from some of the regional posts in terms of repairing the wall, for instance, or any other --

A Yes, absolutely. We had, I think at least from Cairo, some specialists or technicians come for lighting and infrastructure. It may have been after this, it may have been before. I don't remember. I just remember having them on the compound with us.

Q Okay. Do you recall if they were able to perform or complete their tasks, whether it was the lighting or --

A They did.

Q Okay. So moving forward, this is the June 6 time period, we'll move just about 12, 14 hours ahead of time. I would like to mark, this will be Exhibit 12.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 12

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q I'll just describe. This is an email dated June 7, 2012, from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED]. You appear on the CC line of this email, and the document is marked unclassified. It's C05394738. And just at the outset, it's a fairly lengthy exchange, and it touches on several issues. So just for the purposes of our discussion, I'm going to focus just on the first page.

A Okay.

Q But you're free to read the entire thing.

A Okay.

Q Okay. So, again, the email is dated June 7. It appears to be in the morning. So this appears to be shortly after the June 6 attack on the Special Mission Compound. The email is from [REDACTED]. Again, your understanding is he was the RSO that was assigned to Benghazi. Is that right?

A At that time, yes.

Q Okay. And, again, [REDACTED]?

A RSO in Tripoli.

Q Okay. So I would like to read just a portion here of this email. It starts at the top, quote, "[REDACTED]", Thanks again for all the support from up at the mother ship. Sounds like a lot of stuff is being sorted out already, but wanted to make sure we touched base officially via email to clarify from our earlier call. With regards to Blue Mountain: The logistics on the ground are that we do use unarmed Libyan

Nationals contracted through Blue Mountain. They have been a huge support. The previous RSO's and team have done an excellent job of training them up, and in fact it was their training and response that helped us tremendously in the recent IED attack," close quote.

We discussed a little bit before your assessment of the LGF more broadly speaking. With respect to how they responded to the June 6 attack, did you agree with RSO [REDACTED] assessment of Blue Libya at this point in time?

A Blue Mountain?

Q I'm sorry, of Blue Mountain.

A Yes.

Q Okay. Were you able to observe -- he refers here, the team had done an excellent job of training them up. Were you able to observe during your time on the compound that the RSOs, the security staff at that time were, in fact, training the LGF?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So we'll scroll just down to the middle of the page under the heading "TNC," and I'll read from this portion. It reads, quote, "We do have TNC assets on compound who have been extremely loyal and very supportive, both in terms of QRF and the local area contacts and area fam. Those are under a separate bucket and do not/not fall under Blue Mountain," close quote.

I would just like to ask, here it refers to TNC assets. Is it your understanding that's the same as the 17 February Martyrs Brigade?

A Yes, Transitional National Council assets.



Q Okay. And the TNC at this time, they were the governing authority in Libya. Is that correct?

A That's correct.

Q Okay. Could you explain a little bit about that relationship just real briefly for us so we understand why 17 February Martyrs Brigade was also referred to as the TNC assets?

A This was a very complicated political situation going on at the time. I'll try to keep this as brief as I can. There was an attempt to have the different militias fall under government control in order to better manage them and ensure that -- basically to better manage them and to pay salaries. So 17th February was -- their militia was under the umbrella of the Transitional National Council.

Q Okay. Were they a particularly large militia in town at that time?

A They were one of the larger ones.

Q Okay. Do you recall if there were many alternatives from a security standpoint to working with 17 February Martyrs Brigade? Were there many other loyal and very supportive militias in town, to use the language from here?

A I don't know about -- there were other militias in town. I don't know about their suitability for being with us.

Q Okay, that's fair. Again, [REDACTED] appears to be providing an assessment here that they were extremely loyal and very supportive. Did you agree with that assessment?

A I did.

Q Okay. Can you explain why?

A Well, [REDACTED] took particular care for my safety and knowledge of Libya. They were extremely engaged and trying to show us sort of what they thought a future Libya might look like, they themselves being invested in this as young men. I mean, there are probably many, many examples. I didn't have any reason to distrust them in any way.

Q And the name you just used, was he a member of the --

A [REDACTED], yes.

Q And you said he took a particular interest in your security. Could you elaborate on that?

A I think he had a little crush.

Q So he provided some extra security?

[Nonverbal response.]

Q Okay.

I think we can move on to the next topic. For this we'll return to Exhibit 10. Again, just moving forward chronologically, this is the June 8 Benghazi situation report referring to a rally that occurred in Benghazi. Just like to focus on the third paragraph. It was quoted before. There's a sentence here that reads, quote, "Many onlookers, however, denounced the rally and its message," close quote.

Can you help us understand or unpack for us what this meant and why?

A So many onlookers at the -- and this is -- again, I wasn't at this rally, but there were -- we had reliable intelligence from

people that we knew who were at the rally that there was anger expressed by many of the onlookers that the Islamists could rally in such a large number within the city of Benghazi.

Q Okay. And was it your sense that the residents of Benghazi sympathized with the cause or the message of those militias who rallied?

A No, in this case it would be those who were not sympathetic to whatever message this Islamist group may be trying to spread or convey.

Q Okay. In the last hour we discussed some of the security discussions that would take place on the compound, including the Emergency Action Committee meetings that would take place. Was this one of the incidents that would have been discussed, either formally or informally, on the compound?

A It may have been.

Q Okay. Do you recall if it was?

A I don't recall in particular.

Q Okay. All right. And I'm sorry, I'm actually going to take -- step a day back here. I promised you I'd move chronologically. But I'd like to return to a little bit of the discussion we had in the last hour about the attack on -- or, I'm sorry, we are moving forward -- to the Ambassador's convoy. And so this occurred on June 11. You had mentioned that at some point in 2012 that they had closed -- did they have a consulate in Benghazi in 2012?

A No, they had, like, a diplomatic mission.

Q Okay. So they had some form of a special mission, not a

full-fledged consulate in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And that was also staffed by a principal officer?

A It was.

Q Okay. And you stated that they had closed that office before this attack occurred. Is that right?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And the reason that you gave for the British closing the compound was resources. Can you just expand on that a little bit?

A Their villa, like ours, was very expensive to lease and to maintain. When their foreign service equivalence left to go back to London, they replaced him with a British who was resident in Libya. So he didn't require to have a secure facility in which to live, so he had an apartment in town. So they were in the process of, you know, ending police on this villa.

Q Okay. And the day after the attack on the compound the British Ambassador left, is that your understanding, left Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q During this time did the U.S. provide any security assistance, did the compound dispatch any security assets to assist the British?

A Yes, we did.

Q Okay. Can you elaborate on what assistance was provided?

A Sure. We had at that time members of the SST from Tripoli with us, and when we heard about or were told that this attack had taken

place I immediately -- I said, I'm staying back, but you guys go out and see if they need anything. I called my counterpart to see, do you need anything from us? And he said their cars are damaged, can you send out some cars? And they had two injured guards. So I also asked them for -- we had people with some emergency medical training -- to go and to assist.

Q Okay. And to your knowledge, did they render that assistance, were they able to assist the British?

A Yes. We actually got a very kind thank you note from the British Ambassador.

Q Okay. So they appreciated the support?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did the assistance also include any services for them, perhaps helping them to leave Benghazi the following day, the convoy?

A Yes, that's true. We actually did escort their convoy to the airport.

Q Okay. So at that point in time what was the status of the British Mission in Benghazi?

A It was existent. It was staffed by, like I said, a locally employed British national. They still had the villa. The lease hadn't terminated just yet. So they were there.

Q Okay. Were they in the process of terminating the villa?

A They were.

Q Okay. Before the attack they were?

A That's right.

Q Okay. So when we read reports that say that the British closed their mission after the attacks -- and I apologize, I don't have a document in front of me at the moment -- but is that a fair characterization, to say that they closed the mission after or did they just cease operations with their one locally employed staff?

A He was there while I was there. I don't remember if he left for some reason before I left. This would be [REDACTED]. So closing -- I wouldn't say closing their mission. I could be mistaken.

Q Okay. Were you aware of whether the British had any plans to return to Benghazi?

A We kept their cars and other. I don't think we ended up taking their ammunition, but we kept their cars for when they would come back so that they would have cars.

Q Okay. Had that been discussed, that they would come back or they might come back?

A Yes, it had. It was so they would have resources when they -- they were not going to maybe have a continuing full-fledged presence there with a U.K. diplomat, but when the diplomat would come into Benghazi they would have resources.

Q Do you recall if those conversations about the British returning continued even after the attack on the convoy?

A I left not long after, so I don't know.

Q Okay. So I would like at this point to shift topics. There

was a discussion in the last hour about tripwires, the phrase tripwires were used. I would like to continue that discussion and begin just first by asking you, you know, what does that term mean to you? What is a tripwire?

A A tripwire is -- it's an event or sort of an ethos, an environment that causes you to evaluate your safety or your presence in a particular area, and there generally are several. These tripwires that would say crossing these leads us to a bit of concern, crossing these indicates that we should consider this, this, and they generally go down to evacuation.

Q So there's different gradations of tripwires?

A Yes.

Q Okay. That's helpful. So just taking a look at Exhibit 11, this is the email from [REDACTED], just like to note at the outset here your name doesn't appear on this email, but this appears to be a set of tripwires or draft tripwires related to authorized departure.

A Uh-huh.

Q So authorized departure, would that have been one of those different levels that you just mentioned?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what does authorized departure mean?

A Authorized departure means that -- in this case it wouldn't pertain because we did not have any family members, but the family members would be allowed to return from a post at government expense, as would a direct hire.

Q Okay. And would that be for the direct -- so just to understand, so an authorized departure means eligible family members would return home?

A Could.

Q Could return home. Okay. So they weren't required to return home?

A Not -- well, again, we didn't have this here in Benghazi, but in other posts it's been optional.

Q Why was that the case in Benghazi, that eligible family members weren't allowed, just to your understanding?

A I don't know what family members would have done there.

Q Okay, that's fair. So on an authorized departure family members could go home if they so elected?

A Uh-huh.

Q And you mentioned U.S. direct hires. Was it also an option for them if they could go home?

A It would be an option, yes.

Q Okay. So they were not required to go home on authorized departure?

A No.

Q Okay. Is there a different level?

A There's authorized departure, and then there is mandatory departure.

Q Okay. So just to be clear, this email refers to authorized departure. Is that right?



A Yes.

Q Okay. So in the course of the last round you were asked about the Accountability Review Board process and whether or not you participated in that. I would just like to ask you a series of questions both about the process as well as the substance of that investigation.

First, just for the record, were you interviewed by the ARB?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall about when that occurred?

A Within the first week or two of its being -- of its establishment.

Q Okay. And at the time that you met with the ARB with whom did you appear? Was it the full board?

A I think it was only Ambassador Pickering who wasn't there.

Q Okay. So four members --

A Four members.

Q -- four members of the board. And their staffs as well?

A Yes.

Q Okay. At that time were you provided the opportunity to provide information that you deemed to be pertinent to the investigation?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did you, in fact, provide all information that you thought was pertinent?

A Yes.

Q Were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?

A No.

Q Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?

A No.

Q Okay. Have you had the opportunity to review the final report, the public report that was issued?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Are you generally familiar with their findings and the recommendations?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Do you feel that the report captured relevant information that you provided to the Board?

A It's a rather large report and a bit diffuse, so I couldn't say which was my particular contribution. It's kind of a composite, I guess. But I felt that my contributions were considered and represented.

Q Do you recall seeing any information in there that you thought was inaccurate?

A No. I mean, my main recommendation to the Board, which I said over and over, was don't let something like this mean that we don't operate anymore.

Q Okay. Can you just elaborate on that for us?

A Meaning I thought that our mission of diplomacy shouldn't

be diminished by something like this and that we shouldn't sort of retreat. That was my main recommendation.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So if I could, I just wanted to ask you on a couple of broad topics, because we did touch pretty heavily on a couple of key things that I think the committee is interested in. One of those things that we've talked about just recently was the issue of tripwires.

And I'm going to, if this is okay with you guys, I want to just hand her a copy of the ARB report without having to put it into the record so that we don't clunk it up, but I'm happy to give you guys -- I'm happy to enter it as an exhibit, but I think we can stipulate this is the unclassified ARB report.

Mr. Evers. Is it the full report?

Ms. Jackson. Or select pages?

Ms. Sawyer. It looks like the whole report.

Ms. Jackson. Let's just mark it. I think anything that we show the witness ought to be marked.

Mr. Kenny. So this will be Exhibit 13.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 13

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q I'm not going to ask you to review it while we're sitting here. I wanted to just allow you to read the portions that I wanted to ask you about, which are very selective throughout.

But on page 9 of the report, and you'll see it's actually marked, I think paragraph 9 it mentions tripwires, and it says, quote, "Tripwires are too often treated only as indicators of threat rather than an essential trigger mechanism for serious risk management decisions and actions. The Department should revise its guidance to posts and require key offices to perform in-depth status checks of post tripwires."

Do you agree with that finding and recommendation? The finding is the first sentence, that sometimes they are not considered to be an essential trigger mechanism.

A I would agree.

Q And have you had any experience in the time since the ARB report came out to have a sense of whether or not there has been revised guidance? I have to apologize because I don't remember if you've now been at a post since.

A I went back to Libya, but the report had not been issued by then, and I haven't been at an overseas post posted since then, so I don't know.

Q I'm just going to have you skip ahead pretty far to page 31. And down at the bottom there was a discussion and some back and forth, both while we were talking with you and then while the majority was, about the staffing levels, the recommendation or the authorization for five, the difficulties and challenges in meeting five, and what your experience around that had been.

And there is a paragraph there at the bottom that starts, quote,

"As it became clear that DS would not provide a steady complement of five TDY DS agents to Benghazi, expectations on the ground were lowered by the daunting task of gaining approvals and the reality of an ever-shifting DS personnel platform."

And I want you to actually read kind of that entire paragraph. There's three more lines. I just want a sense of whether you feel that accurately reflected your experience.

A Expectations were lowered would reflect my experience. Resignation on the part of post did not reflect my experience.

Q Okay. And what was your experience if you weren't -- that you continued to advocate for and work, like, what was your experience if it wasn't that you felt it was one of resignation? How do you think it could be more accurately stated?

A Well, we didn't stop requesting that we have a full complement of diplomatic security on the compound.

Q And it also sounds like you didn't stop performing your mission at post.

A No, I did not.

Q There were two recommendations related to those findings, in particular about security and staffing, that I just wanted to ask you about, and those are on page 10. There's a paragraph 12, and it says, "The Board strongly endorses the Department's request for increased DS personnel for high- and critical-threat posts and for additional Mobile Security Deployment teams, as well as an increase in DS domestic staffing in support of such action."

So certainly I hope you don't feel that your continued advocacy fell on deaf ears, because it does sound like from this recommendation that, first of all, even before the ARB was convened, that the Department had requested this.

Would you agree that that was a necessary and good step forward?

A Yes.

Q And then the next paragraph goes to another issue that we talked about some, which was the turnover and the difficulty in staffing people for institutional knowledge purposes. And the first sentence there says, "The Department should assign key policy, program, and security personnel at high risk, high threat posts for a minimum of one year."

Do you agree with that recommendation? Do you think that would have helped?

A I do.

Q And then the suggestion for less critical is that the TDY length should be no less than 120 days. Do you think that's a positive step forward?

A It's a positive recommendation.

Q And if these recommendations were implemented, would that have helped with some of the frustrations, at least, that you experienced in terms of your staffing?

A The longer you're on the ground, the better. One of my RSOs was there for 2 months, [REDACTED]. But, I mean, it's hard for me to sort of look back and say how would things have happened different, right?

But I did make these recommendations that we be more consistent in the times that we have people assigned to different locations.

Q I appreciate it.

So this report came out in December of 2012, some 2 months after the attacks?

A Then it came out more quickly than I remember.

Q Yes, I think it was issued, and Congress had it before the start of the new year.

A Okay.

Q We've since had, since that time even, I think, and my memory may not serve me, I think we are the eighth congressional investigation following even the issuance of this report. Do you feel there are areas that would be fruitful in a forward-looking way for us to be looking at to be able to make recommendations? Is there something that was missing from what this report revealed?

A In terms of how the State Department should maintain its posture going forward or --

Q Yes.

A I do not remember everything that's in here, but I don't have, off the top of my head, any recommendations on areas that we should explore further.

Q And something you said I think was very strongly echoed in the ARB report about what you said you reiterated to the ARB over and over, which was it was your hope and desire that the Department not abandon its need and the desire to do diplomacy because of this event.

A Uh-huh.

Q Can you speak a little more to why that was so important to you?

A I've worked in a number of high-threat posts and environments, almost exclusively actually, for better or for worse, and I'm convinced that the presence of American reporting capabilities and the access to Americans is of utmost importance. I mean, all the times that I've been told, even in Libya, "We are so glad you're here," I couldn't count them all. And as we left Benghazi after the attacks, and I went back to Tripoli in the summertime, it was a sense, I was told over and over again, "Why are you abandoning us?"

So it's pretty powerful to have an American presence, diplomatic presence in countries in transition as well as countries that are stable.

Ms. Sawyer. Thank you.

BY MR. DESAI:

Q Ms. [REDACTED], I would like to now ask you a series of questions about some public allegations that have been made in connection with the attacks.

A Okay.

Q We understand that the Select Committee is investigating these public allegations, so we have to ask every witness the same set. Just to be clear, though, I don't want there be to any implication that by asking these questions either I or my colleagues or the Democratic Members of the committee believe these allegations have any merit.



Some of these questions will cover topics that we've covered in the past few hours, some will not. Either way, I'm going to respectfully ask for your indulgence and patience as I go through them. And the way I'll proceed is I will describe the allegation to you. I will then ask whether or not you have any information or evidence to support the allegation, and if you don't, we'll just move on to the next one until we're done.

It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated, quote, "that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi on the night of the attacks.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A I don't.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false claims.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Colonel Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," end quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation."

Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that U.S. facilities in Benghazi

were being used to facilitate weapon transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A No.

Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special Mission Compound, and there have been a number of allegations about the cause and appropriateness of that delay. The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote, "stand down," but that instead there were tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand-down order to CIA personnel?

A No.

Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right decision, do you have any evidence that there was bad or improper reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the Special Mission Compound?

A No.

Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials

that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No.

Q Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi attacks for political reasons and that he then misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship."

Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for political reasons?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made an

intentional misrepresentation when she spoke on the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks.

Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday talk shows?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the President of the United States was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief on the night of the attacks and that he was missing in action.

Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that the President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or missing in action on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in Tripoli, to provide security and medical assistance in their current location.

A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi."

Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House

Armed Services Committee that there was no stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A No.

Q It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard P. "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did."

Do you have any evidence to contradict Chairman McKeon's conclusion?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A No.

Mr. Desai. That's it.

Mr. Kenny. Thank you. We'll go off the record.

1           Ms. Jackson. Okay. We're going to begin. We are in a  
2       classified setting now, and everyone in this room has a  
3       clearance up to TS; is that correct?

4           Okay. Seeing no dissension from that, we understand  
5       that the witness' SCI portion of her clearance was not  
6       passed. So this session will be up to the TS level.

7           If there is any question that is posed to you that you  
8       think requires an SCI answer, please just alert us, and we  
9       will note it. We will not have you divulge into that area in  
10      this setting, and we can figure out how to get that  
11      information, if we deem it absolutely essential to do so.

12          Mr. Evers. One proposal from  
13      the witness leave after her quest  
14      in an SCI-cleared space, and I co  
15      down for you, to see if it would  
16      another witness about the same questions.

17          Ms. Jackson. We'll explore every avenue available to  
18      us.

19          Mr. Evers. Thank you very much.

20                BY MR. DAVIS:

21          Q     So, I want to begin with two quick topics before we  
22      hop to the MANPADS, which is the main reason why we are down  
23      here. I wanted to ask you a question on Exhibit 12. We are  
24      going to try to track down another copy for you. I'm not  
25      sure where the official copy went.

1 Ms. Jackson. The reporter took them.

2 Mr. Evers. Is Exhibit 12 the --

3 Mr. Davis. Email from [REDACTED], LGF Support. Is  
4 June 7, 2012, 8:08 a.m.

5 BY MR. DAVIS:

6 Q Do you have it in front of you?

7 A Yes.

8 Q So I want to ask you about the section under TNC.  
9 I'm just going to read from the email here.

10 "We do have TNC assets on compound who have been  
11 extremely loyal and very supportive, both in terms of QRF and  
12 local contacts and area fam. The  
13 bucket and do not/not fall under

14 When you say, we do have TNC  
15 there TNC assets on compound 24 I

16 A Yes.

17 Q And was it the same individuals who were there 24  
18 hours, 7 days a week, or did they rotate?

19 A They rotated.

20 Ms. Jackson. Could we go off the record for a second?

21 [Discussion off the record.]

22 Ms. Jackson. Let's go back on the record.

23 BY MR. DAVIS:

24 Q So you mentioned that they rotated. Were there any  
25 TNC individuals who slept on the compound?



1 A Yes.

2 Q And where did they sleep?

3 A In their -- I want to say their home. Their villa.

4 Q And how many slept there per evening?

5 A Generally up to four.

6 Q Four. And was it the same four every night or a  
7 different four every night?

8 A It would depend on who was on duty, so it could  
9 change.

10 Q You mentioned earlier a fellow named [REDACTED]?

11 A [REDACTED].

12 Q The individual that has  
13 familiar with another TNC asset?

14 A I am.

15 Q And what can you tell me?

16 A [REDACTED] was with us or -- during most of my time on  
17 the compound in Benghazi, [REDACTED] was with us. And I don't  
18 remember if he was let go or if he left, but he wasn't there  
19 when I finished my tenure.

20 Q So when you first arrived in Benghazi, he was  
21 there?

22 A He was there.

23 Q And by the time you left he was not there?

24 A That's correct.

25 Q Do you know why he either left or was let go?

1           A     There was some kind of a security investigation  
2     [REDACTED], and I don't know what the results of  
3     that was.

4           Q     Okay. I will turn our attention really quickly to  
5     MANPADS.

6           Sheria upstairs asked a question about MANPADS. [REDACTED]

7     [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
8     [REDACTED].

9           Are you familiar with any activities referring or  
10    relating to MANPADS in Benghazi or eastern Libya during your  
11    time there?

12          A     Activities? The colle

13          Q     What can you tell us al  
14    involvement with MANPADS?

15          A     I knew that there was  
16    for, compile, and ultimately destroy MANPADS.

17          Q     And how were you aware of these projects?

18          A     I was at -- people who know most about this -- and  
19    I don't know very much -- [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

20    [REDACTED].

21          Q     Okay. Were you familiar with this program before  
22    you arrived in Benghazi?

23          A     Yes.

24          Q     Okay. And how were you familiar with it before  
25    arriving in Benghazi?

1           A     I was told about it in a classified setting that  
2     this program was more consistent.

3           Q     And who told you about that in a classified  
4     setting?

5           A     [REDACTED]

6           Q     Okay. [REDACTED],  
7     [REDACTED]

8           A     I don't know. All I know is that they had the most  
9     information on it, and that's where I got my information.

10          Q     Okay. You mentioned earlier, there was a  
11     discussion about other U.S. personnel in Benghazi. You  
12     mentioned [REDACTED]. You men-  
13     tioned individuals. You mentioned a whole  
14     lot of others. Are you familiar with all  
15     of strictly [REDACTED]

16          A     I believe they were there. I did not know them.

17          Q     Okay. So did you ever have any encounters with any  
18     of these individuals?

19          A     No, I did not.

20          Q     Okay. Do you know if they ever came to the  
21     Diplomatic Mission at any point in time while you were there?

22          A     Not to my mission.

23          Q     Would you know any of their names, the individuals  
24     who were there?

25          A     No.

1 Q Did you ever have any contact with Andrew Shapiro  
2 during your time at Benghazi?

3 A The name is very familiar. I can't remember how.

4 Q Okay. Do you know approximately how many of these  
5 other contractors were there?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay.

8 BY MS. JACKSON:

9 Q Was it your sense that there were a number of them  
10 or just a few of them?

11 A A handful.

12 Q A handful. So --

13 A To my knowledge. I did.

14 Q Correct. But certainly.

15 A I was told there was a  
16 know what that means.

17 Q And were you told the purpose of this small group?

18 A Well, I was told about this project to collect,  
19 assess, count, and destroy MANPADS, when possible.

20 Q Okay.

21 BY MR. DAVIS:

22 Q Did you ever have any conversations with the deputy  
23 chief of mission or the chief of mission about this program?

24 A No.

25 Ms. Jackson. Okay. I think that is all the questions

1 we have, so let's just go off the record for a second; and if  
2 you want to confer more at length, please do.

3 [Discussion off the record.]

4 BY MR. KENNY:

5 Q I would just like to ask a few follow-up questions  
6 based on the topics that Carlton raised.

7 Specifically with the MANPADS, you mentioned that you  
8 were briefed on a program, some sort of program that included  
9 a project to track, account for, compile, and you said  
10 destroy.

11 So destruction was a component of the program of the  
12 MANPADS program?

13 A As it was described to  
14 far more expertise on this than I

15 Q Sure.

16 What was your understanding of why you were being  
17 briefed on this program?

18 A As principle officer, to have a sense of what was  
19 taking place in my area.

20 Q Okay. And was MANPADS an issue or topic that you  
21 tracked in the course of your reporting?

22 A No, I did not.

23 Q Okay. Were you aware generally of the threats that  
24 MANPADS posed in Libya?

25 A Yes, generally.

1 Q Okay. Can you describe some of those threats?

2 A Well, unsecured MANPADS are, you know, a liability  
3 not just in Libya but anywhere. So it's any kind of  
4 unsecured guns. And we were obviously worried that they  
5 would be used by the wrong people.

6 Q There was also a discussion about your awareness of  
7 certain contractors in -- around Benghazi or eastern Libya.  
8 I would just like to ask, you were never told a specific  
9 number of contractors?

10 A I wasn't, no.

11 Q Okay. So when you said that there was a small  
12 handful, what was that knowledge

13 A Based on being told that  
14 people associated with this program

15 Q Okay. And did you have  
16 number was?

17 A No, I did not.

18 Q Okay.

19 BY MS. SAWYER:

20 Q So based on that, from what you knew, that number  
21 could have fluctuated over time?

22 A I don't know.

23 Q And it could have been higher than the handful that  
24 you thought, particularly at different times?

25 A Again, I don't know.

1 Q So with regard to that particular bit of  
2 information, there's also individuals who would be better  
3 able to inform us than you on that as well?

4 A I would imagine so.

5 BY MR. DAVIS:

6 Q And, just to follow up really quickly, who would  
7 those individuals be?

8 A [REDACTED]

9 Q And is there anybody in particular [REDACTED]

10 A I would talk with [REDACTED] I  
11 don't know exactly what he knew either but --

12 Q Was he the individual [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]  
14 A Yes.

15 Q Did you ever have regu  
16 outside of [REDACTED]?

17 A With the other program officers.

18 Ms. Jackson. I think we are done. Let's go off the  
19 record.

20 [Whereupon, at 3:34 p.m., the interview was concluded.]  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

## EXHIBIT 1

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2012 7:54 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (TRIPOLI TDY)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: developing situation

Thank you. Keep us informed. [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] (TRIPOLI TDY)  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2012 05:20 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: developing situation

Developing situation regarding RSO and ARSO Benghazi. Will update as we get more information.

[REDACTED] Special Agent  
 Regional Security Office | U.S. Embassy Tripoli  
 Cell: [REDACTED] | Email: [REDACTED]@state.gov

SBU  
 This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2012 11:12 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] (TRIPOLI TDY)  
**Subject:** RE: developing situation

Thanks for the news – do you need us to do anything from here?

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 15, 2012 11:03 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** developing situation  
**Importance:** High

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were out on a site advance near the airport when they were stopped at a Feb 17 checkpoint [REDACTED] from QRF and a Feb 17 member) was with them. The militia members at the checkpoint would not let them pass, nor let them go. They were made to drive to the headquarters here (close by near Benghazi University), followed by a militia truck. They are there now at the military compound. Not under duress; still have their weapons.

[REDACTED] I've called the MFA to ask what's going on, and am waiting a response.



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[REDACTED]  
Principal Officer  
U.S. Diplomatic Mission  
Benghazi, Libya

Office: +1 240 553 9321

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@state.gov

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## EXHIBIT 2

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 07, 2012 3:06 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** DS-IP-NEA; [REDACTED] (Tripoli TDY); [REDACTED] (Tripoli); [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Visa\_Advisory - Libya; Cretz, Gene A; [REDACTED]

Our IED incident from last night only underscores the seriousness of these delays. Perhaps that's something the people at the Libyan Embassy might understand: having diplomats injured, or worse, in their country would be a disaster.

Our single DS agent, [REDACTED] had to respond to the blast, ensure that [REDACTED] I, and comms were safe, investigate the blast, coordinate with the QRF who were understandably stressed, negotiate with the incoming militia brigades who had been called by the QRF, while at the same time questioning the local guard force, clearing the compound and perimeter and responding to 2 radios and 2 telephones. We were lucky that the blast was not serious, and that we had our emergency response ducks in order.

I realize that it is the Libyan Embassy at fault here, and not us. I offer last night's incident as an example to show the consuls there how their continued reluctance to assist puts us at risk.

Best, [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, April 06, 2012 5:32 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** DS-IP-NEA; [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Visa\_Advisory - Libya; Cretz, Gene A; [REDACTED]

"The Consulate view is that their earlier letters were causing problems - and they are not going to issue more." Great.

Understood. Without the possibility of airport letters or visas until next week, this means that we are going to have to contract our security operations at post in the absence of personnel.

Since the Libyan Embassy appears to be incapable of fixing its issues, we are going to need to come up with a back up plan that involves other than waiting until tomorrow. Can we get a commitment from the Libyan's to issue in Malta, Tunis, Istanbul, Rome?

We lose our 10th MSD agent on Sunday with no replacement unless MSD is prepared to freeze [REDACTED] in place until we have replacements (my recommendation).

We have 2 MSD pending, 5 DS for Tripoli, and 2 DS for Benghazi.

We have a VIP visit on Sunday, requiring 4 SST and 4 MSD, meaning that we can't support any other moves in town as that means don't have a QRF.

What we will be able to staff on Monday, 4/9 - Thursday, 4/12:

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TRAINING: 3 DS agents / 4 SST (firearms for 2 weeks)  
 AMB: ■ DS agents ■ SST (■■■■■■■■■■)  
 QRF: ■ DS agents ■ SST (■■■■■■■■■■)  
 TOC: ■ DS agents (will only be able to support toC from 0600 - 2200)  
 CMR: ■ SST and RSO

We have no DS agents available to and therefore :

We can NOT support airport arrivals or departures;  
 We can NOT support movements for PCS or TDYers who don't travel with FACT/SNOE trained passengers;  
 We can NOT support out of town trips;  
 We can NOT support DAO planned travel to Benghazi/eastern Libya (would require 6 SST in the absence of Tripoli and Benghazi DS agents. Unable to send 6 SST at this time).

The doing more with less game is getting old fast.

Regional Security Officer

U.S. Embassy

Tripoli, Libya

<http://libya.usembassy.gov/>

From: ■■■■■■■■■■  
 Sent: Thu 4/3/2013 2:20 PM  
 To: ■■■■■■■■■■  
 Cc: DS-IP-NEA; ■■■■■■■■■■  
 Subject: FW: Visa Advisory - Libya

Things are not going smoothly on our end... We tried to get travel letters today, but were denied by the Libyans. We will be back again tomorrow in the AM.

Desk Officer: DS/IP/NEA  
 Office Ph: 571.345.3475 | Mobile Ph: ■■■■■■■■■■ Fax: 571.345.3400  
 Email: ■■■■■■■■■■@state.gov

-----Original Message-----

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From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2012 1:20 PM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: Visa Advisory - Libya

Thanks for the update, [REDACTED]. We thought it was worth a shot but the Embassy is giving us a difficult time today. Unfortunately, I don't think [REDACTED] and the others will be issued before next week. The Libyan Ambassador is traveling, which is making an already difficult situation more complicated.

We'll get back to you when we know more.

Regards,  
 [REDACTED]

This email is UNCLASSIFIED

[REDACTED]  
 Libya Desk Officer  
 [REDACTED]@state.gov  
 [REDACTED]@state.gov.gov  
 Office: 202-647-2581  
 BlackBerry: [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----  
 From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Thursday, April 05, 2012 12:50 PM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: Visa Advisory - Libya

Met with the consulate staff to discuss the application for Letters of Transit for [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

The Consulate view is that their application letters were causing problems - and they are not going to issue more.

The IT problem may get fixed, but likely not. They are tangled up in visa design and file export issues. Not likely this will be resolved well or soon - without outside help.

The consulate indicated that they expected the IT system to be operational later this week or Monday.

#### Action Plan:

DS/IP: I will be back tomorrow at 11 am to ask if their system is up, and review their forecast for issuing visas.

NEA/MAG: The best interim solution is to negotiate an agreement with the Ambassador's office - to use current or replacement hand written labels - on a limited interim basis - rather than the complex printed visa labels.

NOTE: We also need to avoid a [REDACTED] - with every State Department and other Federal agency office and individual contacting the consulate with their own priorities.

Regards  
 [REDACTED]

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## EXHIBIT 3

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND DERIVED INFORMATION. NO FOIA WAIVER

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 23, 2012 10:50 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Benghazi Situation Report - May 23, 2012

FYI---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, May 23, 2012 3:11 PM  
**To:** SES-O; SWO-Cables; NEA-MAG-DL  
**Cc:** Cretz, Gene A.; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] Tripoli); [REDACTED] (DCHA/OTI); [REDACTED] (DCHA/OTI); [REDACTED] (DCHA/DRG/EPT); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] Tripoli); [REDACTED]; [REDACTED] Stevens, John C;  
**Subject:** Benghazi Situation Report – May 23, 2012

For your information and distribution - from U.S. Mission Benghazi.

## Benghazi Situation Report – May 23, 2012

(SBU) **Federalists Feeling Cornered?:** On May 23, PO met with a regular federalist contact who claimed that sympathetic militias in the Cyrenaica Military Council and Benghazi, such as the Abu Salim and Omar Mukhtar brigades, were gathering in the Red Valley west of Benghazi to set up a "checkpoint." This checkpoint was meant to act as a barrier should any violence break out around Misrata, he said. It was also a response to the armed forces Chief of Staff [REDACTED] recent decision that Misrata would be responsible for security up to approximately 40 kilometers west of Ajdabiya, rather than any eastern security apparatus. He said that a meeting was currently taking place in Benghazi, led by Barqa Council chair [REDACTED], at which sending more militias to the Red Valley was being discussed.

(SBU) He also said that at this same meeting, the possibility of federalists taking over oil fields in the east was being debated. He accused Muslim Brotherhood members in the NTC for continued centralization of resources and marginalization of the east, as well as of having designs on the oil revenues. He agreed with PO that if any such action were to take place, it would be both polarizing and destabilizing, but he said that the government in Tripoli would not have the resources to react. (Comment: In previous conversations, Barqa Council members and other federalists have said they weren't interested in blocking oil production or revenues. This is a new talking point for them, if true, and could indicate a growing sense of weakness within the movement in the face of projected national elections, which they have threatened to boycott. End comment.)

(SBU) **Elections Update:** The Benghazi municipal elections concluded peacefully on May 19, with official results released the evening of May 21. One woman was elected to the 41-member council. Press reports indicate that the overall winner in each of the eleven districts will replace the Benghazi representatives currently sitting on the NTC, who are voluntarily stepping down. If this does take place it would be in contrast to the outcome of the Misrata local elections, whose winners have so far been unable to take their seats on the NTC.

(SBU) **ICRC Attack:** Early on May 22, the ICRC compound in Benghazi was hit by an RPG, with another possibly exploding in the air before contact (the compound is located around the corner from U.S. Mission Benghazi). The [redacted] told PO that she had no indication of responsibility and that local police, likely from the Supreme Security Committee, had begun an investigation. A separate RPG attack, possibly linked,

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occurred later in the morning at a downtown bank. Post notes that the April explosion on the U.S. compound, the attack on the UN convoy and the recent bombing incident at the courthouse have all gone unresolved.

(SBU) **AGOCO Oil Production Back at Pre-Revolution Levels:** Contacts at Libya's largest oil company confirmed that oil production had reached almost 400,000 barrels per day, about the same level of production as before the revolution. AGOCO briefly cut back its production in early May in response to protests in front of its Benghazi headquarters.

[REDACTED]  
Principal Officer  
U.S. Diplomatic Mission  
Benghazi, Libya

Office: +1 240 553 9321

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]@state.gov

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## EXHIBIT 4

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[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 25, 2012 6:23 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] (Tripoli TDY)  
**Subject:** RE: DRAFT - Request for DS TDY and FTE support

Before I send in some suggested edits, would it be possible to get RSO's take on the following:

- Benghazi's request for 5 DS agents: there was a commitment made some time ago in which DS agreed to support 5 TDY agents in Benghazi; this has never happened. The status quo has been 3. Is it safe/reasonable to assume that 3 will remain the number we can expect? That's fine if that's the case; I just need to know for planning purposes.
- The cable notes that personnel who have taken FACT/SNOE do not need DS escorts with them; is the case for Benghazi as well? For example, I've taken FACT 3 times; am I exempt from needing a DS agent to travel with me provided we have local drivers on board? If as Principal Officer I do need a DS escort, can we suppose that other TDY'ers who've had FACT do not need one unless traveling after dark?
- If additional full-time DS agents are approved, will one be assigned to Benghazi?

Many thanks, and I second [REDACTED] commendation on the work that's been put into this; we really, really appreciate – and need! – your support here in our eastern outpost...

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 25, 2012 11:52 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] (Tripoli TDY)  
**Subject:** RE: DRAFT - Request for DS TDY and FTE support

hi [REDACTED]. I'm sorry for the delay in reviewing this. Really nice work -- you've done a great job outlining our needs in a clear and easily comprehensible way. I've tracked some suggestions, mostly to put the specific action request up front in the summary; to lay down a marker that the uncertainty will continue beyond the June election; and to thank DS for all of its help. I think the Benghazi section may need a little more clarification... For example, once get the LES drivers on board, will we need five DS agents? If not, it would be good to flag that figure (5) as a temporary need that will decrease once the LES drivers are on board. I'd like [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to clear before we hit send.

Can you please send me a document that includes everyone's edits, for one final review? I promise to look at as soon as possible, so we can have this in Washington by their OOB tomorrow. Great work!

Many thanks.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thu 3/22/2012 11:06 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** DRAFT - Request for DS TDY and FTE support

[REDACTED]

As discussed, please find a draft request to DS HQ for our TDY support along with our concurrence on their proposal for 6 FTE for the RSO office.

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[REDACTED]  
 Regional Security Officer  
 U.S. Embassy  
 Tripoli, Libya  
 [REDACTED]  
<http://libya.usembassy.gov/>

**Date/DTG:** Mar 22, 2012 / N/A  
**From:** AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
**Action:** WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*  
**E.O.:** 13526  
**TAGS:** ASEC, LY  
**Captions:** SENSITIVE  
**Reference:** A) 12 TRIPOLI 64  
**Pass Line:** DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA, DS/IP/SPC,  
 DS/IP/OPO, DS/T/MSD, AND NEA/EX  
**Subject:** TRIPOLI: REQUEST FOR DS PERSONNEL  
 (TDY & FTE)

1. (SBU) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST: Based on past discussions between DS/IP/NEA, DS/IP DAS, PDAS DSS, NEA/EX Embassy Tripoli requests the following full-time employee (FTE) support and temporary assistance to support RSO operations and programs. As noted in REF A, the overall security conditions continue to be unpredictable, with large numbers of armed groups and individuals not under control of the central government, and frequent clashes in Tripoli and other major population centers. As the Regional Security Office seeks to transition from emergency to normalized security operations, post and the RSO face a considerable workload in a constantly evolving environment, which includes essential support for movement security, a continuing high volume of senior-level visits, rebuilding and expanding post's PSA Local Guard Force (LGF), managing major physical security projects, creating a locally engaged bodyguard force, and establishing traditional RSO programs.

2. (SBU) As noted in our EAC reports and regular DS spot reports, the security environment in Tripoli remains uncertain and unstable. Although there has been a marked decrease in the number of militia checkpoints around Tripoli, the Transitional National Council (TNC) has not yet succeeded in demobilizing the multiple militias or bringing them into a centralized command and control structure. In REF A, Post provided a detailed description of the evolving security environment at Post, VIP visit demands, physical security projects underway, and an update of LGF and LES close protection recruitment, staffing, and training efforts.

3 (SBU). As recommended by the Department, post is developing plans to transition our security staffing from an MSD and SST-based model to one that incorporates more locally based and non-emergency assets. Post requests the following support:

-TDY DS AGENTS: Three teams of MSD agents (18 DS agents) provided emergency support to reestablish Embassy Tripoli since September 2011. One of the three MSD teams departed post in March and was not replaced. Post requests twelve (12) TDY DS agents, with a preference for high-threat trained personnel, for 45-60 day rotations, to provide movement and static security in lieu of two MSD teams. While post has reduced its movement security profile in light of a general improvement in the security environment, Post requires a DS escort for movement of personnel who have not received FACT, SNOE, or similar post provided training. MSD and SST personnel man [REDACTED] Quick Reaction Force (QRF) elements, deployed as a response force, for all day time movements in Tripoli. Movements after 1800 hrs generally require QRF support and a DS escort in the vehicle. MSD and SST personnel also provide personnel to support COM and DCM movement teams. Finally, MSD and SST assets provide static armed security at the temporary Chancery and interim Residential compounds. As Post's LES close protection assets and program expands, we would expect the number of TDY DS agents to contract accordingly, with a planned complete reduction of TDY DS agents in Tripoli within the next 3-5 months.



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-DS AGENT SUPPORT IN BENGHAZI: Post requests continued support for 5 TDY DS agents in Benghazi on 45-60 day rotations. Delays associated with visas Embassy Tripoli is in the process of recruitment of four LES drivers and an RSO LES SPSS, which will support operations in Benghazi. Post also plans to deploy a TDY RSO from Tripoli once expanded permanent staffing is established and stabilized. Although a LGF contractor has begun operations in Benghazi, initial discussions regarding contractor provided armed close protection / movement support does not appear viable based on complications regarding GoL firearms permits. Currently, the LGF contractor is able to obtain only short-term (48-72 hr) firearms permits for specific VIP visits.

-MSD TEAMS: Post requests the continued deployment of one MSD team of six agents to provide training team assistance for a surge of newly hired LGF and LES movement security. We would expect the first group of 12 LES movement security team members to complete an 8-week MSD led training course on 4/19 and a second group of 12 team members to complete the same training on 6/14. Approximately 50 newly hired LGF will complete MSD assisted 2-week basic training courses by mid-April. Post anticipates the departure of the MSD training team upon completion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> LES movement security team training course and deployment, on/about 07/01/2012. Post requests that the second MSD team currently deployed until mid-May be replaced with the aforementioned TDY non-MSD DS agents.

-ARSO SUPPORT: Post expects its two permanent ARSOs to arrive in mid-April and mid-June respectively. Post requests one TDY DS AGENT with prior ARSO experience to act in a TDY ARSO capacity for periods of 45-60 days beginning on 04/01 until 07/01.

-ADDITIONAL SUPPORT: Post supports one WAE TDYer to assist with LGF program development and assist with emergency planning, to include development of Post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

4. (SBU) FULL TIME STAFFING: Given the breadth of RSO programs which RSO Tripoli is rebuilding as well as the fluid security environment in which those programs must be rebuild, Post supports the proposed full time staffing for RSO Tripoli of 1 RSO, 1 Deputy RSO, and 4 Assistant RSOs. As Post expects continued operations in Benghazi through CY 2012 and tours of duty to remain at 1 year, the proposed permanent staffing would provide sufficient support during periods of RR/RRBs as well as stabilize support for operations in Benghazi.

5. (U) Point of contact for this request is [REDACTED] RSO Tripoli, [REDACTED]@state.gov, 24hr VOIP/TOC - [REDACTED]

SBU

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## EXHIBIT 5

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[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 25, 2012 12:29 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] (Tripoli TDY)  
**Subject:** RE: DRAFT - Request for DS TDY and FTE support

All,

I inserted one sentence in the Benghazi section, noting that we should require less DS TDY support once the permanent (A)RSO and LES driver positions are staffed here.

Many thanks, [REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 25, 2012 11:52 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] (Tripoli TDY)  
**Subject:** RE: DRAFT - Request for DS TDY and FTE support

hi [REDACTED] - I'm sorry for the delay in reviewing this. Really nice work -- you've done a great job outlining our needs in a clear and easily comprehensible way. I've tracked some suggestions, mostly to put the specific action request up front in the summary; to lay down a marker that the uncertainty will continue beyond the June election; and to thank DS for all of its help. I think the Benghazi section may need a little more clarification... For example, once get the LES drivers on board, will we need five DS agents? If not, it would be good to flag that figure (5) as a temporary need that will decrease once the LES drivers are on board. I'd like [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to clear before we hit send.

Can you please send me a document that includes everyone's edits, for one final review? I promise to look at as soon as possible, so we can have this in Washington by their OOB tomorrow. Great work!

Many thanks.

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thu 3/22/2012 11:06 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** DRAFT - Request for DS TDY and FTE support

[REDACTED]

As discussed, please find a draft request to DS HQ for our TDY support along with our concurrence on their proposal for 6 FTE for the RSO office.

[REDACTED]  
 Regional Security Officer  
 U.S. Embassy  
 Tripoli, Libya  
<http://libya.usembassy.gov/>

**Date/DTG:** Mar 22, 2012 / N/A  
**From:** AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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**Action:** WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*  
**E.O.:** 13526  
**TAGS:** ASEC, LY  
**Captions:** SENSITIVE  
**Reference:** A) 12 TRIPOLI 64  
**Pass Line:** DEPT FOR DS/IP/NEA, DS/IP/SPC,  
 DS/IP/OPO, DS/T/MSD, AND NEA/EX  
**Subject:** TRIPOLI: REQUEST FOR DS PERSONNEL  
 (TDY & FTE)

1. (SBU) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST: Based on past discussions between DS/IP/NEA, DS/IP DAS, PDAS DSS, NEA/EX Embassy Tripoli requests the following full-time employee (FTE) support and temporary assistance to support RSO operations and programs. As noted in REF A, the overall security conditions continue to be unpredictable, with large numbers of armed groups and individuals not under control of the central government, and frequent clashes in Tripoli and other major population centers. As the Regional Security Office seeks to transition from emergency to normalized security operations, post and the RSO face a considerable workload in a constantly evolving environment, which includes essential support for movement security, a continuing high volume of senior-level visits, rebuilding and expanding post's PSA Local Guard Force (LGF), managing major physical security projects, creating a locally engaged bodyguard force, and establishing traditional RSO programs.

2. (SBU) As noted in our EAC reports and regular DS spot reports, the security environment in Tripoli remains uncertain and unstable. Although there has been a marked decrease in the number of militia checkpoints around Tripoli, the Transitional National Council (TNC) has not yet succeeded in demobilizing the multiple militias or bringing them into a centralized command and control structure. In REF A, Post provided a detailed description of the evolving security environment at Post, VIP visit demands, physical security projects underway, and an update of LGF and LES close protection recruitment, staffing, and training efforts.

3 (SBU). As recommended by the Department, post is developing plans to transition our security staffing from an MSD and SST-based model to one that incorporates more locally based and non-emergency assets. Post requests the following support:

-TDY DS AGENTS: Three teams of MSD agents (18 DS agents) provided emergency support to reestablish Embassy Tripoli since September 2011. One of the three MSD teams departed post in March and was not replaced. Post requests twelve (12) TDY DS agents, with a preference for high-threat trained personnel, for 45-60 day rotations, to provide movement and static security in lieu of two MSD teams. While post has reduced its movement security profile in light of a general improvement in the security environment, Post requires a DS escort for movement of personnel who have not received FACT, SNOE, or similar post provided training. MSD and SST personnel man [REDACTED] Quick Reaction Force (QRF) elements, deployed as a response force, for all day time movements in Tripoli. Movements after 1800 hrs generally require QRF support and a DS escort in the vehicle. MSD and SST personnel also provide personnel to support COM and DCM movement teams. Finally, MSD and SST assets provide static armed security at the temporary Chancery and interim Residential compounds. As Post's LES close protection assets and program expands, we would expect the number of TDY DS agents to contract accordingly, with a planned complete reduction of TDY DS agents in Tripoli within the next 3-5 months.

-DS AGENT SUPPORT IN BENGHAZI: Post requests continued support for 5 TDY DS agents in Benghazi on 45-60 day rotations. Delays associated with visas Embassy Tripoli is in the process of recruitment of four LES drivers and an RSO LES SPSS, which will support operations in Benghazi. Post also plans to deploy a TDY RSO from Tripoli once expanded permanent staffing is established and stabilized. Although a LGF contractor has begun operations in Benghazi, initial discussions regarding contractor provided armed close protection / movement support does not appear viable based on complications regarding Gol firearms permits. Currently, the LGF contractor is able to obtain only short-term (48-72 hr) firearms permits for specific VIP visits.

-MSD TEAMS: Post requests the continued deployment of one MSD team of six agents to provide training team assistance for a surge of newly hired LGF and LES movement security. We would expect the first group of 12 LES

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 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

movement security team members to complete an 8-week MSD led training course on 4/19 and a second group of 12 team members to complete the same training on 6/14. Approximately 50 newly hired LGF will complete MSD assisted 2-week basic training courses by mid-April. Post anticipates the departure of the MSD training team upon completion of the 2<sup>nd</sup> LES movement security team training course and deployment, on/about 07/01/2012. Post requests that the second MSD team currently deployed until mid-May be replaced with the aforementioned TDY non-MSD DS agents.

-ARSO SUPPORT: Post expects its two permanent ARSOs to arrive in mid-April and mid-June respectively. Post requests one TDY DS AGENT with prior ARSO experience to act in a TDY ARSO capacity for periods of 45-60 days beginning on 04/01 until 07/01.

-ADDITIONAL SUPPORT: Post supports one WAE TDYer to assist with LGF program development and assist with emergency planning, to include development of Post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

4. (SBU) FULL TIME STAFFING: Given the breadth of RSO programs which RSO Tripoli is rebuilding as well as the fluid security environment in which those programs must be rebuild, Post supports the proposed full time staffing for RSO Tripoli of 1 RSO, 1 Deputy RSO, and 4 Assistant RSOs. As Post expects continued operations in Benghazi through CY 2012 and tours of duty to remain at 1 year, the proposed permanent staffing would provide sufficient support during periods of RR/RRBs as well as stabilize support for operations in Benghazi.

5. (U) Point of contact for this request is [REDACTED], RSO Tripoli, [REDACTED]@state.gov, 24hr VOIP/TOC – [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]

SBU

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## EXHIBIT 6

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.**UNCLASSIFIED**  
SBU

**Action Office:** RSO, MGT  
**Info Office:** DETCMDR\_INFO, EXEC\_INFO

**MRN:** 12 TRIPOLI 130  
**Date/DTG:** Mar 28, 2012 / 280648Z MAR 12  
**From:** AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
**Action:** WASHDC, SECSTATE *ROUTINE*  
**E.O.:** 13526  
**TAGS:** ASEC, AMGT, LY  
**Captions:** SENSITIVE  
**Reference:** 12 TRIPOLI 64  
**Pass Line:** STATE FOR DS/IP/NEA AND NEA/EX  
**Correction Reason:** CORRECTED COPY: Refel added.  
**Subject:** REQUEST FOR DS TDY AND FTE SUPPORT

1. (SBU) SUMMARY AND ACTION REQUEST: As Tripoli seeks to transition from emergency to normalized security operations, post and the RSO face a considerable workload in a constantly evolving environment. Accomplishment of RSO's core objectives -- essential support for movement security, including continuing high volume of senior-level visits; rebuilding and expanding post's PSA Local Guard Force (LGF); managing major physical security projects; creating a locally engaged bodyguard force; and establishing traditional RSO programs -- requires continued TDY support from the Department, as well as an increase in the number of our permanently assigned RSO staff. In order to transition successfully from the current MSD and SST-based security model to one that incorporates more locally based and non-emergency assets, post requests: 12 TDY DS agents for 45-60 day rotations in Tripoli (to replace our two departing MSD teams); 5 TDY DS agents for 45-60 day rotations in Benghazi; continued deployment of one MSD team through completion of training of our second LES bodyguard team (o/a July 1); one TDY ARSO from April 1 til July 1; and one WAE TDY'er to assist with LGF program development and emergency planning. In addition, post requests an increase in full-time staffing for RSO Tripoli to include: one RSO, one Deputy RSO, and four ARSOs. Post is extremely grateful for the extraordinary support provided by DS as we transition to normalized security operations. End summary and action request.

2. (SBU) As noted in our EAC reports and regular DS spot reports, the security environment in Tripoli remains uncertain and unstable. Although there has been a marked decrease in the number of militia checkpoints around Tripoli, the Transitional National Council (TNC) has not yet succeeded in demobilizing the multiple militias or bringing them into a centralized command and control structure. This uncertain environment is likely to continue through the entire transition cycle, which as outlined in the TNC's constitutional charter, is expected to last at least one year beyond the June 2012 election for the constitutional assembly. In REF A, Post provided a detailed description of the evolving security environment at Post, VIP visit demands, physical security projects underway, and an update of LGF and LES close protection recruitment, staffing, and training efforts.

3. (SBU) As recommended by the Department, post is developing plans to transition our security staffing from an MSD and SST-based model to one that incorporates more locally based and non-emergency assets. Post requests the following support:

-TDY DS AGENTS: Post requests twelve (12) TDY DS agents, with a preference for high-threat trained personnel, for 45-60 day rotations, to provide movement and static security in lieu of two MSD teams. Since Tripoli reopened in September 2011, post has relied on three teams of MSD agents (18 DS agents) to provide emergency support in support of our operations. One of the three MSD teams departed post in March and was not replaced. While post has reduced its movement security profile in light of a general improvement in the security environment, Post requires a DS escort for movement of personnel who have not received FACT, SNOE, or similar post provided training. Currently, MSD and SST personnel man [REDACTED] Quick Reaction Force (QRF) elements, deployed as a response force, for all day time movements in Tripoli. Movements after 1800 hrs generally require QRF support and a DS escort in the vehicle. MSD and SST personnel also provide personnel to support COM and DCM movement teams. Post also is required to deploy MSD and SST personnel to support VIP visits, which occur at rate of 3-5 per month. Finally, MSD and SST assets provide static armed security at the temporary Chancery and interim Residential compounds. As Post's LES close protection assets and program expands, we would expect the number of TDY DS agents to contract accordingly, with a planned complete reduction of TDY DS agents in Tripoli within the next 3-5 months. However, complete elimination of our USDH TDY security presence is contingent upon post receiving host government permission to arm our LES bodyguard force.

-DS AGENT SUPPORT IN BENGHAZI: Post requests continued support for 5 TDY DS agents in Benghazi on 45-60 day rotations. This number is required to ensure that we have an appropriate USDH presence to protect our COMSEC; support the two long-term USDH TDY'ers; and support an increasing number of program/assistance TDY's from both Tripoli and Washington. The number of TDY'ers in Benghazi is expected to increase in the run-up to the June elections. Embassy Tripoli is in the process of recruiting four LES drivers and an RSO LES SPSS, which will support operations in Benghazi. Post also plans to deploy a TDY RSO from Tripoli once expanded permanent staffing is established and stabilized. Once these positions are filled, Post anticipates requiring fewer TDY DS agents to support Benghazi. Although an LGF contractor has begun operations in Benghazi, initial discussions regarding contractor-provided armed close protection / movement support does not appear viable based on complications regarding GOL firearms permits. Currently, the LGF contractor is able to obtain only short-term (48-72 hr) firearms permits for specific VIP visits.

-MSD TEAMS: Post requests the continued deployment of one MSD team of six agents to provide training team assistance for a surge of newly hired LGF and LES movement security. We would expect the first group of 12 LES movement security team members to complete an 8-week MSD led training course on April 19 and a second group of 12 team members to complete the same training on June 14. Approximately 50 newly hired LGF will complete MSD assisted two-week basic training courses by mid-April. Post anticipates the departure of the MSD training team upon completion of the second LES movement security team training course and deployment, on/about July 1, 2012. Post requests that the second MSD team currently deployed until mid-May be replaced with the aforementioned TDY non-MSD DS agents.

-ARSO SUPPORT: Post expects its two permanent ARSOs to arrive in mid-April and mid-June respectively. Post requests one TDY DS AGENT with prior ARSO experience to act in a TDY ARSO capacity for periods of 45-60 days beginning on April 1 until July 1.

-ADDITIONAL SUPPORT: Post requests one WAE TDYer to assist with LGF program development and assist

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with emergency planning, to include development of Post's Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

4. (SBU) FULL TIME STAFFING: Given the vast increase in the number of programs and personnel that RSO is required to manage as well as the fluid security environment in which those programs must be built, Post supports the proposed full time staffing for RSO Tripoli of 1 RSO, 1 Deputy RSO, and 4 Assistant RSOs. As Post expects continued operations in Benghazi through CY 2012 and Tripoli's tours of duty to remain at one year, the proposed permanent staffing would provide sufficient support during periods of RR/RRBs while also stabilizing support for operations in Benghazi.

5. (U) Embassy Tripoli is extremely grateful for the extraordinary support provided by DS as we transition to normalized security operations. Point of contact for this request is [REDACTED], RSO Tripoli, [REDACTED]@state.gov, 24hr VOIP/TOC - [REDACTED]

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ GRETZ \_\_\_\_\_

Drafted By:

Cleared By:

Approved By:

Released By:

Info:

Action Post:

Dissemination Rule: DETCMDR\_INFO, RSO, EXEC\_INFO, MGT\_ACTION

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## EXHIBIT 7

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Cretz, Gene A; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: TRIPOLI - REQUEST FOR DS TDY AND FTE SUPPORT  
**Date:** Saturday, April 21, 2012 1:57:23 PM

Looks like no new movement on the full complement of 5 TDY DS personnel for Benghazi, but rather a reassessment to bring numbers lower. We have a second driver candidate coming in this week; we've already hired one.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 21, 2012 7:06 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Cretz, Gene A; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: TRIPOLI - REQUEST FOR DS TDY AND FTE SUPPORT

FYI.

SBU  
 This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**From:** SMART Core [mailto:svcSMARTBTSrctSPrec@state.gov]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 19, 2012 10:05 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (Tripoli)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** TRIPOLI - REQUEST FOR DS TDY AND FTE SUPPORT

**UNCLASSIFIED**  
 SBU



**Action Office:** RSO, DAO, MGT  
**Info Office:** DETCMDR\_INFO, EXEC\_INFO

**MRN:** 12 STATE 38939  
**Date/DTG:** Apr 19, 2012 / 191856Z APR 12  
**From:** SECSTATE WASHDC  
**Action:** AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI ROUTINE  
**E.O.:** 13526  
**TAGS:** ASEC, AMGT, LY  
**Captions:** SENSITIVE  
**Reference:** 12 TRIPOLI 130  
**Subject:** TRIPOLI - REQUEST FOR DS TDY AND FTE SUPPORT

UNCLAS STATE 038939

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REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

SENSITIVE

E.O. 13526: N/A  
TAGS: ASEC, AMGT, LY  
SUBJECT: TRIPOLI - REQUEST FOR DS TDY AND FTE SUPPORT

REF: A) 12 TRIPOLI 130

1. (U) DS/IP acknowledges post's requests. Responses are keyed to REFTEL.
2. (SBU) Per post's request for twelve (12) TDY agents: DS/IP is currently planning on maintaining two (2) MSD teams consisting of twelve (12) agents in Tripoli to provide security support and complete training of the LES security movement team. One (1) MSD team is scheduled to depart at the end of June. The second team is scheduled to depart on or about September 2. MSD is planning on overlapping the relief of the remaining MSD team to assist in post security support over the July 4 holiday. There are currently no MSD teams scheduled to permanently depart in Mid-May. As of April 1, DS has authorized three (3) cycles of six (6) TDY agents for 60 day TDYs to Libya. DS/IP will coordinate with RSO to re-validate TDY support requirements every 30 days, for these (6) positions.
3. (SBU) DS will continue to provide DS agent support in Benghazi. DS/IP recommends that post continues its efforts to hire LES drivers for Benghazi to enable the DS TDYers to solely perform their protective security function. DS/IP also recommends a joint re-assessment of the number of DS agents requested for Benghazi to include input from RSO Tripoli, TDY RSO Benghazi, and DS/IP in an effort to develop a way forward.
4. (U) Per post's request for an agent with prior ARSO experience to act in a TDY ARSO capacity: DS/IP recommends that the RSO utilize one of the six (6) TDY agents assigned by DS/IP to work on traditional ARSO programs, until both assigned ARSOs arrive in mid-April and mid-June respectively.
5. (SBU) Per post's request for a WAE TDYer to assist with RSO programs: DS/IP has authorized one (1) WAE TDY to assist the RSO in managing the LGF and SD programs and to assist post with emergency planning. DS/IP is in the process of identifying a WAE for a 30-45 day TDY.
6. (U) Per post's response to increase full time staffing: DS/IP supports the increase of two (2) new FTE, Special Agent Positions, for Tripoli. DS/IP has begun working with NEA/EX, RM/BP, and RMA to obtain approval for reprogramming regional positions to Libya.
7. (U) The DS/IP/NEA point of contact for Libya is [REDACTED] at (571) 345-3475. Minimize considered.  
CLINTON

Signature: CLINTON

Drafted By: DS/IP/NEA:  
Cleared By: DEPARTMENT OF STATE:  
CHARLENE R. DS/IP/OPO/  
Approved By: DS/IP/RD/NEA:  
Info:

Action Post: AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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**Dissemination Rule:** DETCMDR\_INFO, RSO, DAO\_Action\_2, EXEC\_INFO, MGT\_ACTION

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## EXHIBIT 8

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

C05409934-MOU

From: [REDACTED] on behalf of [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Friday, May 11, 2012 8:29 AM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: RSO TDY

These two agents would come for the June / July period?

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Friday, May 11, 2012 2:01 PM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: RSO TDY

Currently we are looking at two experienced FS-3s who will hopefully obtain the necessary approvals either today or early next week for a TDY to Benghazi to be the RSO. I have attached the latest spread sheet as a reference.

[REDACTED] FYI we had two Agents lined up, but both had to cancel it was not a visa issue. One was for training and one was personal.

Regards,

Desk Officer | DS/IP/NEA  
 Office Ph: 571.345.3475 | Mobile Ph: [REDACTED] Fax: 571.345.3400  
 Email: [REDACTED]@state.gov

SBU  
 This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Friday, May 11, 2012 4:34 AM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RSO TDY

I know you are doing your best to get bodies for Benghazi and I understand and appreciate the difficulties. I have looped [REDACTED] in on the cc line so she is aware of the challenges.

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With [REDACTED] leaving on June 8, [REDACTED] will be alone from June 8 until [REDACTED] arrival on July 1 --- unless you are able to get a volunteer with a visa.

This is problematic for a number of reasons. In light of the recent bombing at the courthouse, highway robberies, the clash at the University that led to a shooting that the SST responded and removed [REDACTED] and the lack of a DS formally trained QRF --- I do not think a junior or senior agent should be left alone at any time. Too much can go wrong too quickly. The junior officers that have been sent out, do not have RSO experience. They cannot run this post without the possibility of inviting a serious and significant issue/incident that may very well lead to injury/death or a bad decision.

I know I am preaching to the choir, as you and I had this discussion before I came here. Bottom line --- Post could run with one senior (minimum FS-3 with RSO experience) and one junior agent, but this would be a strain on all, even with the hiring of two drivers. Three is the ideal number of agents because of the programs, work load and no days off for 45-60 days. I am not going to discuss turn-over... I will save that for another email.

I anticipate an increase in visitors and hence, an increase in movement requests with the upcoming elections. I apologize that I am whining without a proposed solution, but the only thing I could suggest is that [REDACTED] could send someone from his office to temporarily serve as the RSO? Sorry [REDACTED] --- that is all I can come up with. Recognizing this is not a popular alternative, in my honest assessment, it would be negligible to leave an inexperienced agent in the RSO position.

Please feel free to share my thoughts with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] --- I just thought I would keep the email between the four of us, so we could hash out a solution.

As always [REDACTED] I know you are doing all that you can. I watched you jump through many hoops, all at the same time, while I was waiting on my visa.

So many thanks for the support and effort --- [REDACTED]

## EXHIBIT 9

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** Stevens, John C  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 12, 2012 10:52 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: following up on UK convoy attack.

We share your concern. [REDACTED] and I have been discussing recommending a pause in our Bgzi PO staffing to further assess the security situation there. As you note below, there is a natural pause coming up, in the two-week gap between [REDACTED] June 14 departure and [REDACTED] anticipated arrival at the end of the month. One idea would be to use this time to allow our RSO team in Benghazi (perhaps reduced in number) to continue to assess the threat environment and consider ways to mitigate. Those are our initial thoughts. -- C

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 11, 2012 11:11 PM  
**To:** Stevens, John C  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: following up on UK convoy attack.

Chris

I am getting quite concerned about the security situation for our folks in Benghazi. Maybe we should talk on the phone tomorrow at your convenience. Just informally touch base. We are at a (possible) natural break in the action coming up, with [REDACTED] leaving. We can bring [REDACTED] and a few others into the conversation at the next stage, but I would like your sense of things first.

**Director**  
**Office of Maghreb Affairs**  
**Department of State**  
**202-647-4679**  
**[REDACTED]@state.gov**

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 11, 2012 1:19 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]; NEA-LIBYADESK; SES-O; [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] TRIPOLI RSO; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: following up on UK convoy attack.

All,

Benghazi convened an informal EAC with RSO, [REDACTED] and PO. We have suspended movements today/this evening and will also remain on compound tomorrow, Tuesday, June 12. Tomorrow afternoon we will assess the movements currently planned for Wednesday, June 13.

[REDACTED] (Principal Officer, U.S. Mission Benghazi)

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 11, 2012 4:05 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]; NEA-LIBYADESK; SES-O; [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] TRIPOLI RSO; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** following up on UK convoy attack.

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

Just to let you know – we've alerted GOL security contacts of the attack on the UK Ambassador's convoy in Benghazi, asked whether they have any information regarding threats to US diplomats or facilities, and also asked for extra protection for all USG diplomatic facilities.

'We'll hold an EAC at 6:00 pm to discuss the attack and will send a readout afterwards.

## EXHIBIT 10

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED] on behalf of DS Command Center  
**Sent:** Friday, June 08, 2012 1:12 PM  
**To:** DSCC\_C DS Seniors; DSCC\_E TIA/PII; DSCC\_E TIA/ITA; DS-IP-NEA  
**Cc:** DS Command Center; DSCC\_Management\_Team  
**Subject:** (SBU)Libya - Benghazi Situation Report - 06082012

**Categories:** Working

#### Benghazi Situation Report – June 8, 2012

(SBU) **Islamists Rally in Downtown Benghazi:** In an unprecedented show of force, close to 1,000 Islamist militia members rallied in Benghazi on the evening of June 7. They arrived in 150-200 heavily armed technical vehicles and congregated at the downtown courthouse. Mission Benghazi local staff and post contacts at the scene reported seeing pro-al Qaeda flags and banners as well as the black-and-white flags associated with Islamic militias. The fighters represented the more extremist wings of several militias, including Ansar al-Sharia, the 17<sup>th</sup> February Martyr's Brigade and the Libya Shield, as well as the Preventive Security Services who are associated with the Ministry of Interior. Lesser-known militias were also present. The fighters came from Benghazi, Derna, Ajdabiya and even as far as Misrata.

(SBU) Banners at a stage set up at the courthouse square proclaimed the rally to be the "First Conference for Islamic Sharia." While overt anti-western rhetoric was absent, contacts report seeing young men wearing t-shirts in support of Abu Yahya al-Libi, the Libyan-born al Qaeda leader who was killed in Pakistan earlier this week, as well as pro-Osama bin Laden t-shirts. Some demonstrators denounced democracy as a western tool, charging that sharia law was the only way forward for Libya.

(SBU) The demonstration appeared to be well-organized, and there were no reports of violent actions. Contacts and Mission personnel report no real government presence at the rally to counter the demonstrators. Many onlookers, however, denounced the rally and its message. Comment: There was very little advance notice of the rally, and post contacts from across the spectrum expressed shock and outrage that such a large demonstration could take place without the government's knowledge. This is the first such demonstration of Islamist groups in Benghazi since the revolution, if ever. End comment.

(SBU) **Mission Benghazi IED Attack Update:** Two days after the attack, local security forces remain in place around the Mission compound. Post has requested extra night patrols for an indefinite period. The wall reparations were completed last night (June 7). There have been no new claims of responsibility. Post is seeking an update on the investigation, but has little expectation of any arrests or conclusive findings. PO continues to receive messages and phone calls of support from contacts.

SBU  
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## EXHIBIT 11

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 11, 2012 5:06 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** DS/IP recommends you request a combined EAC

**Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**SensitivityCode:** Sensitive  
**SMARTCategory:** Working

DS/IP recommends that the mission holds a combined EAC with Tripoli and Benghazi to go over the security situation in Benghazi. It seems we have crossed a tripwire for consideration of authorized departure, which also makes it fall into events triggering heightened security posture (12 Tripoli 504 see link). Please highlight any additional security support that is requested as part of the EACs "Measures to consider" under heightened security posture and/or considerations for authorized departure, such as requesting additional DS TDY support.

<http://repository.state.gov/archive/2012/06/10/1e93d599-b799-4c7e-9e70-f15896a28617/12-TRIPOLI-504.eml.PDF>

**Events triggering consideration of authorized departure:**

- Demonstrations and incidents of social unrest, including protests related to the election, become large-scale and widespread, with the greater likelihood of violence.
- Sustained fighting among various militias, tribes or factions, particularly in major urban areas.
- Use of armed force by separatist elements against the central government.
- A dramatic increase in violent crime, including looting and home invasions.
- Small-scale attacks by Qadhafi loyalists or terrorist elements in or around Tripoli, Benghazi, and major urban areas.
- Major international carriers halt service to Libya.
- Sustained disruption of airport services, inability to land USG flights at Tripoli International or Mitiga Airports.
- Sustained disruption of overland evacuation routes to Tunisia and Egypt.
- Severe shortages of fuel, food and/or a disruption of city water supplies (or any combination of these three factors) due to conflict or sabotage.
- Dissolution of the TNC or cabinet due to political infighting.
- Attempted violent overthrow of the transitional government.
- Refusal of the TNC to accept results of the new election and step down from power.
- Assassination of a leading political figure.
- Attack on U.S. facilities or personnel, resulting in injuries.
- Inability of central government to respond to Embassy emergencies or security needs.

**Measures to consider:**

All measures listed in conjunction with a heightened security posture, plus:

- Hold an EAC to consider authorized departure
- Cancel all but mission-essential TDY visits
- Temporarily suspend non-emergency public services
- Limit movements to mission-essential work only
- Meet with USG funded implementing partners to review their security posture, encourage drawdown of their staff if appropriate (particularly if Embassy is drawing down via authorized departure status)
- Establish 24-hour command post at the Embassy to monitor and report on the ongoing situation, including Consular, security, public diplomacy and USAID elements as appropriate.
- Set up a regular reporting schedule with Washington (either via telephone or written reports) and ensure that headquarters officials from all agencies respect that reporting timeline.
- Establish a duty schedule to ensure staff have adequate rest time.
- Prepare evacuation paperwork.
- Convene a conference call with NEA/EX, Crisis Management, Consular Affairs, appropriate military authorities to consider contingency measures for the evacuation of private American citizens.



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- Consult friendly embassies on possible evacuation plans.
- Request additional Diplomatic Security TDY personnel.
- Review and reduce classified holdings.

Thank you,

[REDACTED]

Desk Officer | DS/IP/NEA

Office Ph: 571.345.3475 | Mobile Ph: [REDACTED] Fax: 571.345.3400

Email: [REDACTED]@state.gov

SBU

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## EXHIBIT 12

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 07, 2012 8:08 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; TRIPOLI RSO; Benghazi RSO; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LGF Support

Thanks again for all the support from up at the mother ship.  
 Sounds like a lot of stuff is being sorted already, but wanted to make sure we touched base officially via email to clarify from our earlier call.

With regards to Blue Mountain:

The logistics on the ground are that we do use unarmed Libyan Nationals contracted through Blue Mountain. They have been a huge support, the previous RSO's and team have done an excellent job of training them up and in fact it was their training and response that helped us tremendously in the recent IED attack.

We have a guard force of about 21 personnel; 20 guards, and 1 Guard Force commander. They have 4 teams (A,B,C, & D) and we have 24/7 coverage. We have 6 guys on during the day time, and 5 on night time. We've been using an additional 3 at night for coverage since the IED attack. Those additional 3 guards are part of a bucket of 5 guards on standby that have already been vetted by both Blue Mountain and by us.

We have 3 gates to the compound, all 3 are manned 24/7, the main gate (Charlie1) is where all official traffic is directed to and that is also where we have the guard booth where the Guard Force Commander works from.

**TNC:**

We do have TNC assets on compound who have been extremely loyal and very supportive, both in terms of QRF and local area contacts and area fam. Those are under a separate bucket and do not/not fall under Blue Mountain.

**TDY Support:**

As for TDY'ers, in light of recent events here on the ground, I was hoping to get some Agent/TDY staffing support for the near term. My concern is that [REDACTED] is leaving us this Friday, June 8<sup>th</sup> and his replacement, [REDACTED] isn't arriving in country until June 17<sup>th</sup>, assuming no delays or issues arise. While the Principal officer is also leaving, she's here until June 14<sup>th</sup>, any movements would leave 1 agent to hold down the compound.

It is also my understanding that there will be a short term TDY'er to cover the PO spot for about 2 weeks, so we would need coverage then as well. To further compound the issue, both our drivers are scheduled for training in Tripoli from June 11-14, which would then require 1 agent to not only remain on compound for support, but also one to escort the PO to her meetings.

I agree with [REDACTED] assessment, if we can pull an additional 2 TDYers, that would be excellent. In the interim, if we can at least get 1 additional agent to help cover us in the short term that would help alleviate some of the security coverage concerns.

Appreciate all the support!

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Cell - [REDACTED]  
 RSO Duty - [REDACTED]  
 RSO Desk - 240-553-9328

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 07, 2012 12:31 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LGF Support

Yes,

I just spoke with [REDACTED] about this. The concern is that Blue Mountain use Libyan nationals and not foreigners. I was informed this morning by the COM and DCM in regards. I feel like the messenger. But I just spoke with the DCM and explained the situation and she's aware. Again the concern is about armed foreign nationals been used by Blue Mountain, which they know is not the case in Benghazi.

I suggested we have at least two TDY ARSO's detoured to Benghazi instead of Tripoli since it is my understanding we'll have four TDY ARSO's ([REDACTED]) on the ground here as well as the RSO ([REDACTED]) and two PCS ARSO's ([REDACTED]) in the near future.

My apologies I didn't explain myself further in the e-mail in regards to Blue Mountain.

[REDACTED]

*ARSO* [REDACTED] (*Acting RSO*)

*Regional Security Office*  
 US Embassy Tripoli  
 [REDACTED] Contact Number

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 07, 2012 12:10 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LGF Support

[REDACTED]

All the LGF in Benghazi are contracted by Blue Mountain.-- [REDACTED]

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 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 07, 2012 3:08 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; TRIPOLI RSO; Benghazi RSO; [REDACTED]; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LGF Support

[REDACTED]

Just a quick note in regards to Blue Mountain. The company has lost several security contracts here in Tripoli, including The Corinthian Hotel and Palm City complex. The latest information is Blue Mountain is not licensed by the GOL to provide security services in Libya.

I would advise not to use their services to provide security for any of our annexes and/or offices due to the sensitivity this issue has with the current GOL. The COM/DCM have concerns in regards and will not approve this.

Of course, security is priority one, but I believe we can augment the current security assets we have without the use of Blue Mountain.

If needs be, why not have the a couple of the TDY ARSO's currently due to arrive in Tripoli, detoured to Benghazi instead?

[REDACTED]

ARSO [REDACTED] (*Acting RSO*)

*Regional Security Office*  
 JS Embassy Tripoli  
 [REDACTED] Contact Number

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 06, 2012 6:26 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; TRIPOLI RSO; Benghazi RSO; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LGF Support

Thanks [REDACTED]

In the short term, we're adding an additional 3 guards on the night shift to assist with coverage. We will reassess over the next 2-3 days to determine what numbers make the most sense. As we develop a better idea of our needs, especially in the short term with the turn-over of agents, we will keep you informed.

Thanks again!  
 [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 06, 2012 2:04 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; TRIPOLI RSO; Benghazi RSO; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: LGF Support

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Using the 17<sup>th</sup> Brigade to push out your perimeter is a great idea. If you need additional TNC for armed support or if the road closure turns into a long term project, we can send out additional funding to add more TNC to the stipends.

With regard to the guards, no problem, pull in as many guards as you need and don't hesitate to keep them around as long as you need them.

Good luck and stay safe,  
[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 06, 2012 7:51 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]; TRIPOLI RSO; Benghazi RSO  
**Subject:** LGF Support

[REDACTED]

After this morning's attack, we currently have a contractor working to rebuild the wall back to its original integrity - the estimate on completion of the wall is by COB tomorrow, for the wall and for the Constantine wire. While we have the 17<sup>th</sup> Brigade supporting us and locking down the road in front of the mission, we could use a few extra guards to rove on the property over the next couple of days to support.

We have been in communication with our Blue Mountain contact here on the ground in Benghazi and he has the extra bodies to support, he only needs the green light from us. I wanted to reach out to you first to confirm if we're good to go. In the short term, we would need them just over the next 48 hours to help support and secure.

We may reach out for additional guards again in the next week when we go down to 2 agents.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thanks!  
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Cell - [REDACTED]  
RSO Desk - 240-553-9328

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*"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."  
-- George Santayana, Reason in Common Sense (1905)*

**INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to Title III of the Omnibus Diplomatic and Antiterrorism Act of 1986, 22 U.S.C. § 4831 *et seq.*, (the "Act"), Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton convened an Accountability Review Board (ARB) for Benghazi to examine the facts and circumstances surrounding the September 11-12, 2012, killings of four U.S. government personnel, including the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, John Christopher Stevens, in Benghazi, Libya. A series of attacks on September 11-12, 2012 involving arson, small-arms and machine-gun fire, and use of rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), grenades and mortars, focused on two U.S. facilities in Benghazi, as well as U.S. personnel en route between the two facilities. In addition, the attacks severely wounded two U.S. personnel, injured three Libyan contract guards and resulted in the destruction and abandonment of both facilities – the U.S. Special Mission compound (SMC) and Annex.

Four Board members were selected by the Secretary of State and one member from the intelligence community (IC) was selected by the Director for National Intelligence. Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering served as Chairman, with Admiral Michael Mullen as Vice Chairman. Additional members were Catherine Bertini, Richard Shinnick, and Hugh Turner, who represented the IC.

The criminal investigation of the September 11-12, 2012, Benghazi attacks, for which the statutory responsibility rests with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), was still underway at the time of this report. The Board enjoyed excellent cooperation with the Department of Justice and FBI throughout preparation of this report. The key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators remain to be determined by the ongoing criminal investigation.

As called for by the Act, this report examines: whether the attacks were security related; whether security systems and procedures were adequate and implemented properly; the impact of intelligence and information availability; whether any other facts or circumstances in these cases may be relevant to appropriate security management of U.S. missions worldwide; and, finally, whether any U.S. government employee or contractor, as defined by the Act, breached her or his duty.

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The Benghazi attacks represented the first murder of a U.S. ambassador since 1988, and took place 11 years to the day after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Ambassador Stevens personified the U.S. commitment to a free and democratic Libya. His knowledge of Arabic, his ability to move in all sectors of the population, and his wide circle of friends, particularly in Benghazi, marked him as an exceptional practitioner of modern diplomacy. The U.S. Special Mission in Benghazi, established in November 2011, was the successor to his highly successful endeavor as Special Envoy to the rebel-led government that eventually toppled Muammar Qaddafi in fall 2011. The Special Mission bolstered U.S. support for Libya's democratic transition through engagement with eastern Libya, the birthplace of the revolt against Qaddafi and a regional power center.

The Benghazi attacks took place against a backdrop of significantly increased demands on U.S. diplomats to be present in the world's most dangerous places to advance American interests and connect with populations beyond capitals, and beyond host governments' reach. With State Department civilians at the forefront of U.S. efforts to stabilize and build capacity in Iraq, as the U.S. military draws down in Afghanistan, and with security threats growing in volatile environments where the U.S. military is not present – from Peshawar to Bamako – the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) is being stretched to the limit as never before. DS overall has done a fine job protecting thousands of employees in some 273 U.S. diplomatic missions around the world. No diplomatic presence is without risk, given past attempts by terrorists to pursue U.S. targets worldwide. And the total elimination of risk is a non-starter for U.S. diplomacy, given the need for the U.S. government to be present in places where stability and security are often most profoundly lacking and host government support is sometimes minimal to non-existent.

The Benghazi attacks also took place in a context in which the global terrorism threat as most often represented by al Qaeda (AQ) is fragmenting and increasingly devolving to local affiliates and other actors who share many of AQ's aims, including violent anti-Americanism, without necessarily being organized or operated under direct AQ command and control. This growing, diffuse range of terrorist and hostile actors poses an additional challenge to American security officers, diplomats, development professionals and decision-makers seeking to mitigate risk and remain active in high threat environments without resorting to an unacceptable total fortress and stay-at-home approach to U.S. diplomacy.

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For many years the State Department has been engaged in a struggle to obtain the resources necessary to carry out its work, with varying degrees of success. This has brought about a deep sense of the importance of husbanding resources to meet the highest priorities, laudable in the extreme in any government department. But it has also had the effect of conditioning a few State Department managers to favor restricting the use of resources as a general orientation. There is no easy way to cut through this Gordian knot, all the more so as budgetary austerity looms large ahead. At the same time, it is imperative for the State Department to be mission-driven, rather than resource-constrained – particularly when being present in increasingly risky areas of the world is integral to U.S. national security. The recommendations in this report attempt to grapple with these issues and err on the side of increased attention to prioritization and to fuller support for people and facilities engaged in working in high risk, high threat areas. The solution requires a more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs, which, in total, constitute a small percentage both of the full national budget and that spent for national security. One overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives.

Mindful of these considerations, the ARB has examined the terrorist attacks in Benghazi with an eye towards how we can better advance American interests and protect our personnel in an increasingly complex and dangerous world. This Board presents its findings and recommendations with the unanimous conclusion that while the United States cannot retreat in the face of such challenges, we must work more rigorously and adeptly to address them, and that American diplomats and security professionals, like their military colleagues, serve the nation in an inherently risky profession. Risk mitigation involves two imperatives – engagement and security – which require wise leadership, good intelligence and evaluation, proper defense and strong preparedness and, at times, downsizing, indirect access and even withdrawal. There is no one paradigm. Experienced leadership, close coordination and agility, timely informed decision making, and adequate funding and personnel resources are essential. The selfless courage of the four Americans who died in the line of duty in Benghazi on September 11-12, 2012, as well as those who were injured and all those who valiantly fought to save their colleagues, inspires all of us as we seek to draw the right lessons from that tragic night.

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**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW**

A series of terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11-12, 2012, resulted in the deaths of four U.S. government personnel, Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty; seriously wounded two other U.S. personnel and injured three Libyan contract guards; and resulted in the destruction and abandonment of the U.S. Special Mission compound and Annex.

**FINDINGS**

In examining the circumstances of these attacks, the Accountability Review Board for Benghazi determined that:

1. The attacks were security related, involving arson, small arms and machine gun fire, and the use of RPGs, grenades, and mortars against U.S. personnel at two separate facilities – the SMC and the Annex – and en route between them. Responsibility for the tragic loss of life, injuries, and damage to U.S. facilities and property rests solely and completely with the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks. The Board concluded that there was no protest prior to the attacks, which were unanticipated in their scale and intensity.
2. Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department (the “Department”) resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.

Security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a “shared responsibility” by the bureaus in Washington charged with supporting the post, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security. That said, Embassy Tripoli did not demonstrate strong and sustained advocacy with Washington for increased security for Special Mission Benghazi.

The short-term, transitory nature of Special Mission Benghazi’s staffing, with talented and committed, but relatively inexperienced, American personnel often on temporary assignments of 40 days or less, resulted in diminished institutional knowledge, continuity, and mission capacity.

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Overall, the number of Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) security staff in Benghazi on the day of the attack and in the months and weeks leading up to it was inadequate, despite repeated requests from Special Mission Benghazi and Embassy Tripoli for additional staffing. Board members found a pervasive realization among personnel who served in Benghazi that the Special Mission was not a high priority for Washington when it came to security-related requests, especially those relating to staffing.

The insufficient Special Mission security platform was at variance with the appropriate Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) standards with respect to perimeter and interior security. Benghazi was also severely under-resourced with regard to certain needed security equipment, although DS funded and installed in 2012 a number of physical security upgrades. These included heightening the outer perimeter wall, safety grills on safe area egress windows, concrete jersey barriers, manual drop-arm vehicle barriers, a steel gate for the Villa C safe area, some locally manufactured steel doors, sandbag fortifications, security cameras, some additional security lighting, guard booths, and an Internal Defense Notification System.

Special Mission Benghazi's uncertain future after 2012 and its "non-status" as a temporary, residential facility made allocation of resources for security and personnel more difficult, and left responsibility to meet security standards to the working-level in the field, with very limited resources.

In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate. At the same time, the SMC's dependence on the armed but poorly skilled Libyan February 17 Martyrs' Brigade (February 17) militia members and unarmed, locally contracted Blue Mountain Libya (BML) guards for security support was misplaced.

Although the February 17 militia had proven effective in responding to improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on the Special Mission in April and June 2012, there were some troubling indicators of its reliability in the months and weeks preceding the September attacks. At the time of Ambassador Stevens' visit, February 17 militia members had stopped accompanying Special Mission vehicle movements in protest over salary and working hours.

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Post and the Department were well aware of the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks but at no time were there ever any specific, credible threats against the mission in Benghazi related to the September 11 anniversary. Ambassador Stevens and Benghazi-based DS agents had taken the anniversary into account and decided to hold all meetings on-compound on September 11.

The Board found that Ambassador Stevens made the decision to travel to Benghazi independently of Washington, per standard practice. Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as a staffing gap between principal officers in Benghazi. Plans for the Ambassador's trip provided for minimal close protection security support and were not shared thoroughly with the Embassy's country team, who were not fully aware of planned movements off compound. The Ambassador did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. Mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer 2012. His status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.

Communication, cooperation, and coordination among Washington, Tripoli, and Benghazi functioned collegially at the working-level but were constrained by a lack of transparency, responsiveness, and leadership at the senior levels. Among various Department bureaus and personnel in the field, there appeared to be very real confusion over who, ultimately, was responsible and empowered to make decisions based on both policy and security considerations.

3. Notwithstanding the proper implementation of security systems and procedures and remarkable heroism shown by American personnel, those systems and the Libyan response fell short in the face of a series of attacks that began with the sudden penetration of the Special Mission compound by dozens of armed attackers.

The Board found the responses by both the BML guards and February 17 to be inadequate. The Board's inquiry found little evidence that the armed February 17 guards offered any meaningful defense of the SMC, or succeeded in summoning a February 17 militia presence to assist expeditiously.

The Board found the Libyan government's response to be profoundly lacking on the night of the attacks, reflecting both weak capacity and near absence of

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central government influence and control in Benghazi. The Libyan government did facilitate assistance from a quasi-governmental militia that supported the evacuation of U.S. government personnel to Benghazi airport. The Libyan government also provided a military C-130 aircraft which was used to evacuate remaining U.S. personnel and the bodies of the deceased from Benghazi to Tripoli on September 12.

The Board determined that U.S. personnel on the ground in Benghazi performed with courage and readiness to risk their lives to protect their colleagues, in a near impossible situation. The Board members believe every possible effort was made to rescue and recover Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith.

The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference.

4. The Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11 attacks. Known gaps existed in the intelligence community's understanding of extremist militias in Libya and the potential threat they posed to U.S. interests, although some threats were known to exist.
5. The Board found that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. However, the Board did not find reasonable cause to determine that any individual U.S. government employee breached his or her duty.

**KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

With the lessons of the past and the challenges of the future in mind, the Board puts forward recommendations in six core areas: Overarching Security Considerations; Staffing High Risk, High Threat Posts; Training and Awareness; Security and Fire Safety Equipment; Intelligence and Threat Analysis; and Personnel Accountability.

*OVERARCHING SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS*UNCLASSIFIED

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1. The Department must strengthen security for personnel and platforms beyond traditional reliance on host government security support in high risk, high threat<sup>1</sup> posts. The Department should urgently review the proper balance between acceptable risk and expected outcomes in high risk, high threat areas. While the answer cannot be to refrain from operating in such environments, the Department must do so on the basis of having: 1) a defined, attainable, and prioritized mission; 2) a clear-eyed assessment of the risk and costs involved; 3) a commitment of sufficient resources to mitigate these costs and risks; 4) an explicit acceptance of those costs and risks that cannot be mitigated; and 5) constant attention to changes in the situation, including when to leave and perform the mission from a distance. The United States must be self-reliant and enterprising in developing alternate security platforms, profiles, and staffing footprints to address such realities. Assessments must be made on a case-by-case basis and repeated as circumstances change.
2. The Board recommends that the Department re-examine DS organization and management, with a particular emphasis on span of control for security policy planning for all overseas U.S. diplomatic facilities. In this context, the recent creation of a new Diplomatic Security Deputy Assistant Secretary for High Threat Posts could be a positive first step if integrated into a sound strategy for DS reorganization.
3. As the President's personal representative, the Chief of Mission bears "direct and full responsibility for the security of [his or her] mission and all the personnel for whom [he or she is] responsible," and thus for risk management in the country to which he or she is accredited. In Washington, each regional Assistant Secretary has a corresponding responsibility to support the Chief of Mission in executing this duty. Regional bureaus should have augmented support within the bureau on security matters, to include a senior DS officer to report to the regional Assistant Secretary.
4. The Department should establish a panel of outside independent experts (military, security, humanitarian) with experience in high risk, high threat areas to support DS, identify best practices (from other agencies and other countries), and regularly evaluate U.S. security platforms in high risk, high threat posts.

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<sup>1</sup> The Board defines "high risk, high threat" posts as those in countries with high to critical levels of political violence and terrorism, governments of weak capacity, and security platforms that fall well below established standards.

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5. The Department should develop minimum security standards for occupancy of temporary facilities in high risk, high threat environments, and seek greater flexibility for the use of Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) sources of funding so that they can be rapidly made available for security upgrades at such facilities.
6. Before opening or re-opening critical threat or high risk, high threat posts, the Department should establish a multi-bureau support cell, residing in the regional bureau. The support cell should work to expedite the approval and funding for establishing and operating the post, implementing physical security measures, staffing of security and management personnel, and providing equipment, continuing as conditions at the post require.
7. The Nairobi and Dar es Salaam ARBs' report of January 1999 called for collocation of newly constructed State Department and other government agencies' facilities. All State Department and other government agencies' facilities should be collocated when they are in the same metropolitan area, unless a waiver has been approved.
8. The Secretary should require an action plan from DS, OBO and other relevant offices on the use of fire as a weapon against diplomatic facilities, including immediate steps to deal with urgent issues. The report should also include reviews of fire safety and crisis management training for all employees and dependents, safehaven standards and fire safety equipment, and recommendations to facilitate survival in smoke and fire situations.
9. Tripwires are too often treated only as indicators of threat rather than an essential trigger mechanism for serious risk management decisions and actions. The Department should revise its guidance to posts and require key offices to perform in-depth status checks of post tripwires.
10. Recalling the recommendations of the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam ARBs, the State Department must work with Congress to restore the Capital Security Cost Sharing Program at its full capacity, adjusted for inflation to approximately \$2.2 billion in fiscal year 2015, including an up to ten-year program addressing that need, prioritized for construction of new facilities in high risk, high threat areas. It should also work with Congress to expand utilization of Overseas

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Contingency Operations funding to respond to emerging security threats and vulnerabilities and operational requirements in high risk, high threat posts.

11. The Board supports the State Department's initiative to request additional Marines and expand the Marine Security Guard (MSG) Program – as well as corresponding requirements for staffing and funding. The Board also recommends that the State Department and DoD identify additional flexible MSG structures and request further resources for the Department and DoD to provide more capabilities and capacities at higher risk posts.

*STAFFING HIGH RISK, HIGH THREAT POSTS*

12. The Board strongly endorses the Department's request for increased DS personnel for high- and critical-threat posts and for additional Mobile Security Deployment teams, as well as an increase in DS domestic staffing in support of such action.
13. The Department should assign key policy, program, and security personnel at high risk, high threat posts for a minimum of one year. For less critical personnel, the temporary duty length (TDY) length should be no less than 120 days. The ARB suggests a comprehensive review of human resources authorities with an eye to using those authorities to promote sending more experienced officers, including "When Actually Employed" (WAE) personnel, to these high risk, high threat locations, particularly in security and management positions for longer periods of time.
14. The Department needs to review the staffing footprints at high risk, high threat posts, with particular attention to ensuring adequate Locally Employed Staff (LES) and management support. High risk, high threat posts must be funded and the human resources process prioritized to hire LES interpreters and translators.
15. With increased and more complex diplomatic activities in the Middle East, the Department should enhance its ongoing efforts to significantly upgrade its language capacity, especially Arabic, among American employees, including DS, and receive greater resources to do so.

*TRAINING AND AWARENESS*UNCLASSIFIED

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16. A panel of Senior Special Agents and Supervisory Special Agents should revisit DS high-threat training with respect to active internal defense and fire survival as well as Chief of Mission protective detail training.
17. The Diplomatic Security Training Center and Foreign Service Institute should collaborate in designing joint courses that integrate high threat training and risk management decision processes for senior and mid-level DS agents and Foreign Service Officers and better prepare them for leadership positions in high risk, high threat posts. They should consult throughout the U.S. government for best practices and lessons learned. Foreign Affairs Counter Threat training should be mandatory for high risk, high threat posts, whether an individual is assigned permanently or in longer-term temporary duty status.

SECURITY AND FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

18. The Department should ensure provision of adequate fire safety and security equipment for safehavens and safe areas in non-Inman/SECCA<sup>2</sup> facilities, as well as high threat Inman facilities.
19. There have been technological advancements in non-lethal deterrents, and the State Department should ensure it rapidly and routinely identifies and procures additional options for non-lethal deterrents in high risk, high threat posts and trains personnel on their use.
20. DS should upgrade surveillance cameras at high risk, high threat posts for greater resolution, nighttime visibility, and monitoring capability beyond post.

INTELLIGENCE AND THREAT ANALYSIS

21. Post-2001, intelligence collection has expanded exponentially, but the Benghazi attacks are a stark reminder that we cannot over-rely on the certainty or even likelihood of warning intelligence. Careful attention should be given to factors showing a deteriorating threat situation in general as a basis for improving

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<sup>2</sup> “Inman buildings” are diplomatic facilities that meet the mandatory minimum physical security standards established after the 1985 Inman Report about the 1983 Embassy and Marine barracks bombings in Lebanon. “SECCA” refers to the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999, passed by Congress after the 1998 Nairobi and Dar es Salaam Embassy bombings. SECCA mandated setback and other standards for newly acquired diplomatic facilities.

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security posture. Key trends must be quickly identified and used to sharpen risk calculations.

22. The DS Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis should report directly to the DS Assistant Secretary and directly supply threat analysis to all DS components, regional Assistant Secretaries and Chiefs of Mission in order to get key security-related threat information into the right hands more rapidly.

*PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY*

23. The Board recognizes that poor performance does not ordinarily constitute a breach of duty that would serve as a basis for disciplinary action but is instead addressed through the performance management system. However, the Board is of the view that findings of unsatisfactory leadership performance by senior officials in relation to the security incident under review should be a potential basis for discipline recommendations by future ARBs, and would recommend a revision of Department regulations or amendment to the relevant statute to this end.
24. The Board was humbled by the courage and integrity shown by those on the ground in Benghazi and Tripoli, in particular the DS agents and Annex team who defended their colleagues; the Tripoli response team which mobilized without hesitation; those in Benghazi and Tripoli who cared for the wounded; and the many U.S. government employees who served in Benghazi under difficult conditions in the months leading up to the September 11-12 attacks. We trust that the Department and relevant agencies will take the opportunity to recognize their exceptional valor and performance, which epitomized the highest ideals of government service.

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**POLITICAL AND SECURITY CONTEXT PRIOR TO THE ATTACKS**

On April 5, 2011, then-Special Envoy to the Libyan Transitional National Council (TNC) Chris Stevens arrived via a Greek cargo ship at the rebel-held city of Benghazi to re-establish a U.S. presence in Libya. The State Department had been absent from Libya since the Embassy in Tripoli suspended operations and evacuated its American personnel on February 25, 2011, amidst an escalating campaign by Muammar Qaddafi to suppress violently a popular uprising against his rule.

Benghazi, the largest city and historical power center in eastern Libya, was the launching point for the uprising against Qaddafi and a long time nexus of anti-regime activism. It also served as the rebel-led Transitional National Council's base of operations. Eastern Libya (Cyrenaica) had long felt neglected and oppressed by Qaddafi, and there had been historic tensions between it and the rest of the country. Throughout Qaddafi's decades-long rule, eastern Libya consistently lagged behind Tripoli in terms of infrastructure and standard of living even as it was responsible for the vast majority of Libya's oil production. Stevens' presence in the city was seen as a significant sign of U.S. support for the TNC and a recognition of the resurgence of eastern Libya's political influence.

Benghazi was the seat of the Senussi monarchy until 1954, the site of a U.S. consulate, which was overrun by a mob and burned in 1967, and the place where Qaddafi began his 1969 revolution against the monarchy. Qaddafi's subsequent combination of oppression and neglect enhanced the city's sense of marginalization, and its after-effects were felt more widely in the eastern region where a Salafist jihadist movement took root. Jihadis from Benghazi engaged in Afghanistan against the Soviets and took up arms against U.S. forces in the post-2003 Iraq insurgency. Many of them reemerged in 2011 as leaders of anti-Qaddafi militias in eastern Libya.

Stevens initially operated from the Tibesti Hotel in downtown Benghazi. He was accompanied by a security contingent of 10 Diplomatic Security agents whose primary responsibilities were to provide personal protective services. Stevens' mission was to serve as the liaison with the TNC in preparation for a post-Qaddafi democratic government in Libya. By all accounts, he was extremely effective,

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earned the admiration of countless numbers of Libyans, and personified the U.S. government commitment to a free and democratic Libya.

Benghazi, however, was still very much a conflict zone. On June 1, 2011, a car bomb exploded outside the Tibesti Hotel, and shortly thereafter a credible threat against the Special Envoy mission prompted Stevens to move to the Annex. On June 21, 2011, he and his security contingent moved to what would become the Special Mission Benghazi compound (SMC). By the end of August 2011, the walled compound consisted of three sections (Villas A, B, and C) on 13 acres. (Use of Villa A was discontinued in January 2012, when the SMC footprint was consolidated into the Villas B and C compounds, some eight-acres total.)

On July 15, 2011, the United States officially recognized the TNC as Libya's legitimate governing authority although Qaddafi and his forces still retained control over significant portions of the country, including Tripoli. The TNC continued attacking the remaining Qaddafi strongholds, and Tripoli fell earlier than expected at the end of August. The TNC immediately began moving the government from Benghazi to Tripoli. By early September, 21 members of State Department Mobile Security Deployment teams were in Tripoli with the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in preparation for the resumption of operations of the U.S. Embassy, which Ambassador Gene Cretz officially re-opened on September 22, 2011. From September 2011 onwards, Embassy Tripoli was open with a skeleton staff built on temporary duty (TDY) assignments, to include the DCM and Regional Security Officer (RSO). (The fall of Tripoli took place shortly after Embassy Tripoli lost its assigned staff and bureaucratically ceased to exist, pursuant to Department regulations regarding the length of time a post can remain open in evacuation status.)

Although the TNC declared that Tripoli would continue to be the capital of a post-Qaddafi Libya, many of the influential players in the TNC remained based in Benghazi. Stevens continued as Special Envoy to the TNC in Benghazi until he departed Libya on November 17, 2011, after which the Special Envoy position was not filled. Stevens was replaced by an experienced Civil Service employee who served for 73 days in what came to be called the "principal officer" position in Benghazi. After November 2011, the principal officer slot became a TDY assignment for officers with varying levels of experience who served in Benghazi anywhere from 10 days to over two months, usually without transiting Tripoli. In December 2011, the Under Secretary for Management approved a one-year continuation of the U.S. Special Mission in Benghazi, which was never a consulate

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and never formally notified to the Libyan government. Stevens arrived in Tripoli on May 26, 2012, to replace Cretz as Ambassador.

Throughout Libya, the security vacuum left by Qaddafi's departure, the continued presence of pro-Qaddafi supporters, the prevalence of and easy access to weapons, the inability of the interim government to reestablish a strong security apparatus, and the resulting weakness of those security forces that remained led to a volatile situation in which militias previously united in opposition to Qaddafi were now jockeying for position in the new Libya. Frequent clashes, including assassinations, took place between contesting militias. Fundamentalist influence with Salafi and al Qaeda connections was also growing, including notably in the eastern region. Public attitudes in Benghazi continued to be positive toward Americans, and it was generally seen as safer for Americans given U.S support of the TNC during the war. However, 2012 saw an overall deterioration of the security environment in Benghazi, as highlighted by a series of security incidents involving the Special Mission, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and third-country nationals and diplomats:

- March 18, 2012 – Armed robbery occurs at the British School in Benghazi.
- March 22, 2012 – Members of a militia searching for a suspect fire their weapons near the SMC and attempt to enter.
- April 2, 2012 – A UK armored diplomatic vehicle is attacked after driving into a local protest. The vehicle was damaged but occupants uninjured.
- April 6, 2012 – A gelatina bomb (traditional homemade explosive device used for fishing) is thrown over the SMC north wall.
- April 10, 2012 – An IED (gelatina or dynamite stick) is thrown at the motorcade of the UN Special Envoy to Libya in Benghazi.
- April 26, 2012 – Special Mission Benghazi principal officer is evacuated from International Medical University (IMU) after a fistfight escalated to gunfire between Tripoli-based trade delegation security personnel and IMU security.
- April 27, 2012 – Two South African nationals in Libya as part of U.S.-funded weapons abatement, unexploded ordnance removal and demining project are detained at gunpoint by militia, questioned and released.
- May 22, 2012 – Benghazi International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) building struck by rocket propelled grenades (RPGs).
- May 28, 2012 – A previously unknown organization, Omar Abdurrahman group, claims responsibility for the ICRC attack and issues a threat against the United States on social media sites.

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- June 6, 2012 – IED attack on the SMC. The IED detonates with no injuries but blows a large hole in the compound's exterior wall. Omar Abdurrahman group makes an unsubstantiated claim of responsibility.
- June 8, 2012 – Two hand grenades target a parked UK diplomatic vehicle in Sabha (800 km south of Benghazi).
- June 11, 2012 – While in Benghazi, the British Ambassador's convoy is attacked with an RPG and possible AK-47s. Two UK security officers are injured; the UK closes its mission in Benghazi the following day.
- June 12, 2012 – An RPG attack is made on the ICRC compound in Misrata (400 km west of Benghazi).
- June 18, 2012 – Protestors storm the Tunisian consulate in Benghazi.
- July 29, 2012 – An IED is found on grounds of the Tibesti Hotel.
- July 30, 2012 – Sudanese Consul in Benghazi is carjacked and driver beaten.
- July 31, 2012 – Seven Iranian-citizen ICRC workers abducted in Benghazi.
- August 5, 2012 – ICRC Misrata office is attacked with RPGs. ICRC withdraws its representatives from Misrata and Benghazi.
- August 9, 2012 – A Spanish-American dual national NGO worker is abducted from the Islamic Cultural Center in Benghazi and released the same day.
- August 20, 2012 – A small bomb is thrown at an Egyptian diplomat's vehicle parked outside of the Egyptian consulate in Benghazi.

It is worth noting that the events above took place against a general backdrop of political violence, assassinations targeting former regime officials, lawlessness, and an overarching absence of central government authority in eastern Libya. While the June 6 IED at the SMC and the May ICRC attack were claimed by the same group, none of the remaining attacks were viewed in Tripoli and Benghazi as linked or having common perpetrators, which were not viewed as linked or having common perpetrators. This also tempered reactions in Washington. Furthermore, the Board believes that the longer a post is exposed to continuing high levels of violence the more it comes to consider security incidents which might otherwise provoke a reaction as normal, thus raising the threshold for an incident to cause a reassessment of risk and mission continuation. This was true for both people on the ground serving in Libya and in Washington.

While the June IED attack and the RPG attack targeting the UK convoy in Benghazi prompted the Special Mission to reduce movements off compound and have a one-week pause between principal officers, the successful nature of Libya's

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July 7, 2012, national elections – which exceeded expectations – renewed Washington’s optimism in Libya’s future. Nevertheless, the immediate period after the elections did not see the central government increase its capacity to consolidate control or provide security in eastern Libya, as efforts to form a government floundered and extremist militias in and outside Benghazi continued to work to strengthen their grip. At the time of the September attacks, Benghazi remained a lawless town nominally controlled by the Supreme Security Council (SSC) – a coalition of militia elements loosely cobbled into a single force to provide interim security – but in reality run by a diverse group of local Islamist militias, each of whose strength ebbed and flowed depending on the ever-shifting alliances and loyalties of various members. There was a notional national police presence, but it was ineffectual. By August 2012, Special Mission Benghazi would evaluate the worsening security situation and its implications.

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*"I was at the foot of the wide marble staircase when the breakthrough occurred. Fanatical knife-carrying intruders, bleeding from cuts received as they were pushed through broken windows, ran down the hall. Putting on gas masks and dropping tear gas grenades, we engaged them on the stairs with rifle butts. In seconds tear gas saturated the area. We then moved into the vault, securing the steel combination door, locking in ten persons.... My greatest fear, which I kept to myself, was that gasoline for the generator would be found, sloshed under the vault door and ignited. When after minutes this did not happen, our hearts sank, nonetheless, as outside smoke wafted in and we knew the building had been set afire."*

*-- First-person account of the June 5, 1967 mob siege of the then-U.S. Consulate in Benghazi*

**TIMELINE OF THE ATTACKS****September 11-12, 2012**

*(All times are best estimates based on existing data and should be considered approximate.)*

*The Prelude – the Ambassador's Arrival*

Ambassador Chris Stevens arrived in Benghazi, Libya on September 10, 2012, accompanied by two temporary duty (TDY) Assistant Regional Security Officers (ARSOs) from Tripoli. It was the Ambassador's first visit to Benghazi since he departed as then-Special Envoy in November 2011. With the Ambassador's arrival, there were eight Americans at the Special Mission compound (SMC) on September 10-11, 2012, including the Ambassador; Information Management Officer (IMO) Sean Smith, who arrived in Benghazi one week earlier to provide TDY communications and management support; and five Diplomatic Security (DS) agents (three assigned on short-term TDY to Benghazi – "TDY RSO", "ARSO 1" and "ARSO 2" – and the two who traveled from Tripoli to provide protection for the Ambassador during his visit – "ARSO 3" and "ARSO 4"). The eighth American, the TDY Benghazi principal officer, completed his 13-day assignment and returned to his full-time job in Tripoli the morning of September 11, leaving seven Americans at the compound. Ambassador Stevens was scheduled to remain in Benghazi until September 14, and his visit was timed in part to fill the staffing gaps between TDY principal officers as well as to open an American Corner at a local school and to reconnect with local contacts.

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In the absence of an effective central government security presence, the Special Mission's Libyan security contingent was composed of four armed members of the February 17 Martyrs' Brigade (February 17) – a local umbrella organization of militias dominant in Benghazi (some of which were Islamist) and loosely affiliated with the Libyan government, but not under its control. They resided in a guest house building on compound. Normally four members resided on the Special Mission compound near the front gate, but on September 11 one had been absent for several days, reportedly due to a family illness. The Special Mission also had an unarmed, contract local guard force (LGF), Blue Mountain Libya (BML), which provided five guards per eight-hour shift, 24/7, to open and close the gates, patrol the compound, and give warning in case of an attack.

After the Ambassador's arrival at the Special Mission on September 10, ARSO 1 gave the Ambassador a tour of the SMC and pointed out the safe area and escape hatch windows in the Ambassador's room in Villa C. Later that afternoon, the Ambassador visited the Annex for a briefing. He then met with the City Council at a local hotel for dinner, an event at which local media invited by the Council showed up unexpectedly, despite U.S. efforts to keep the Ambassador's program and movements from being publicized.

*Security Environment on September 11, Preceding Attacks*

In consultation with the TDY RSO and mindful of the threat environment and the September 11 anniversary, Ambassador Stevens did not leave the SMC on September 11, but rather held meetings there. At approximately 0645 local that morning, a BML contract guard saw an unknown individual in a Libyan Supreme Security Council (SSC) police uniform apparently taking photos of the compound villas with a cell phone from the second floor of a building under construction across the street to the north of the SMC. The individual was reportedly stopped by BML guards, denied any wrongdoing, and departed in a police car with two others. This was reported to ARSOs 1 and 2. Later that morning they inspected the area where the individual was seen standing and informed the Annex of the incident. There had not been any related threat reporting. The local February 17 militia headquarters was informed of the incident and reportedly complained to the local SSC on the Special Mission's behalf. The Ambassador reviewed a Special Mission-drafted complaint to local authorities on the surveillance incident; however, it was not submitted due to the typically early closure of Libyan government offices. Later on September 11, the Ambassador was informed by his Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in Tripoli of the breach of the Embassy Cairo

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compound that had occurred that day and briefly discussed the news with ARSO 3. The TDY RSO was also informed of the Cairo compound breach by his Regional Security Officer counterpart in Tripoli and shared the information with colleagues at the Annex.

At approximately 1940 local, Ambassador Stevens and an accompanying ARSO escorted a Turkish diplomat to the SMC's main exit at the north C1 gate, where nothing out of the ordinary was noted. Some 30 minutes later, between 2010 and 2030 local, a UK security team supporting a day visit by British diplomats dropped off vehicles and equipment at the SMC (per arrangements made after the UK diplomatic office in Benghazi suspended operations in June 2012). When the UK security team departed via the C1 gate at about 2030 local, there were no signs of anything unusual, including no roadblocks outside of the compound, and traffic flowed normally.

Ambassador Stevens and IMO Sean Smith retired for the night to Villa C at about 2100 local, while ARSO 4 watched a video in the Villa C common space. ARSOs 1, 2, and 3 were sitting together outside and behind Villa C; the TDY RSO was working in the workspace building referred to as the "Office" or "TOC" (Tactical Operations Center), near the Villa B compound, which was connected to the Villa C compound by an alleyway. From the TOC, the TDY RSO could monitor a series of security cameras placed in and around the perimeter of the SMC. The ARSOs were each armed with their standard issue sidearm pistol; their "kits," generally consisting of body armor, radio and an M4 rifle, were in their bedroom/sleeping areas, in accord with Special Mission practice.

*The Attack on the Special Mission Compound*

An SSC police vehicle, which had arrived at the main compound gate (C1) at 2102 local, departed at 2142. The Special Mission had requested that a marked SSC police car be posted outside of the compound 24/7, but in practice a car was there only intermittently. The Special Mission had requested this presence again, specifically for the duration of the Ambassador's visit. A subsequent local press report quotes an SSC official as saying that he ordered the removal of the car "to prevent civilian casualties."

Around the same time, the TDY RSO working in the TOC heard shots and an explosion. He then saw via security camera dozens of individuals, many armed, begin to enter the compound through the main entrance at the C1 gate. He hit the

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duck and cover alarm and yelled a warning over the radio, and recalled no such warning from the February 17 or BML guards, who had already begun to flee to points south and east in the compound, towards the Villa B area. ARSOs 1 and 2 heard an attack warning from the BML guards passed on over the radio. The TDY RSO also alerted the Annex and Embassy Tripoli by cell phone.

The other three ARSOs behind Villa C also heard gunfire and explosions, as well as chanting, and responded immediately along with ARSO 4, who was inside Villa C. Following the SMC's emergency plan, ARSO 1 entered Villa C to secure the Ambassador and IMO in the safe area and to retrieve his kit; ARSOs 2, 3, and 4 moved to retrieve their kits, which were located in Villa B and the TOC. ARSO 1 in Villa C swiftly located the Ambassador and IMO Smith, asked them to don body armor, and led them into the safe area in Villa C, which ARSO 1 secured. He then reported their whereabouts by radio to the TDY RSO in the TOC. ARSO 1, armed with an M4 rifle, shotgun and pistol, took up a defensive position inside the Villa C safe area, with line of sight to the safe area gate and out of view of potential intruders. ARSO 1 gave his cell phone to the Ambassador, who began making calls to local contacts and Embassy Tripoli requesting assistance.

From Villa C, ARSO 4 ran to his sleeping quarters in Villa B to retrieve his kit, while ARSOs 2 and 3 ran to the TOC, where ARSO 3 had last seen the Ambassador, and where ARSO 2's kit was located. (ARSO 2's sleeping quarters were in the TOC, making him the designated "TOC Officer" in their emergency react plan.) ARSO 3, upon not finding the Ambassador in the TOC, ran to Villa B to get his kit; ARSO 2 remained in the TOC with the TDY RSO and shared notification and communication duties with him. At Villa B, ARSO 3 encountered ARSO 4, who was also arming and equipping himself, and the two then attempted to return to Villa C. They turned back, however, after seeing many armed intruders blocking the alley between Villas B and C. ARSOs 3 and 4, outnumbered and outgunned by the armed intruders in the alley, returned to Villa B and barricaded themselves in a back room, along with one LGF member whom they had encountered outside Villa B.

*Attack Continues, Use of Fire as a Weapon*

Sometime between 2145 and 2200 local, armed intruders appear to have used filled fuel cans that were stored next to new, uninstalled generators at the February 17 living quarters near the C1 entrance to burn that building. The crowd

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also lit on fire vehicles that were parked nearby. Members of the crowd then moved to Villa C.

In Villa C, ARSO 1, who was protecting Ambassador Stevens and IMO Smith in the safe area, heard intruders breaking through the Villa C front door. Men armed with AK rifles started to destroy the living room contents and then approached the safe area gate and started banging on it. ARSO 1 did not want to compromise their location in the safe area by engaging the intruders, and he warned the Ambassador and IMO Smith to prepare for the intruders to try to blast the safe area gate locks open. Instead the intruders departed, and the lights in Villa C appeared to dim. ARSO 1 realized that smoke from fires set inside the villa, away from his vantage point, was reducing the light and visibility. (There was no line of sight to Villa C from the Villa B/TOC compound where the TDY RSO and three ARSOs were barricaded. The TDY RSO in the TOC did not see smoke emerge on the view from the camera near Villa C until shortly after 2200 local.)

As smoke engulfed the Villa C safe area, ARSO 1 led Ambassador Stevens and IMO Smith into a bathroom with an exterior window. All three crawled into the bathroom, while the thick, black smoke made breathing difficult and reduced visibility to zero. ARSO 1 tried to seal the door with towels and provide some ventilation by opening the window. Instead, opening the window worsened conditions and drew more smoke into the bathroom, making it even more difficult to breathe. ARSO 1 determined that they could no longer stay in the safe area and yelled to the others, whom he could no longer see, to follow him to an adjacent bedroom, where there was an egress window. ARSO 1 crawled on his hands and knees through a hallway to the bedroom, unable to see, while yelling and banging on the floor to guide the Ambassador and IMO Smith to safety. ARSO 1 opened the window grill and exited the building, collapsing onto a small, partly enclosed patio, at which point he believed he was being fired upon. Immediately following his exit, ARSO 1 realized the Ambassador and IMO had not followed him out the window. He then re-entered Villa C through the egress window several times to search for his colleagues while under fire by the intruders outside. He was unable to locate the Ambassador or IMO Smith, and severe heat and smoke forced him to exit the building to recover between each attempt. After several attempts, he climbed a ladder to the roof where he radioed the TOC for assistance and attempted unsuccessfully to ventilate the building by breaking a skylight. Due to severe smoke inhalation, however, ARSO 1 was almost unintelligible, but the TDY RSO and ARSO 2 in the TOC finally understood him to be saying that he did not have the Ambassador or IMO Smith with him.

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While Villa C was under attack, armed individuals looted Villa B's interior and attempted to enter the area where ARSOs 3 and 4 were barricaded. The intruders carried jerry cans and were seen on security cameras trying to dump them on vehicles outside the TOC, but they were apparently empty. A group of intruders also attempted unsuccessfully to break down the TOC entrance.

*Annex Responds, DS Agents Rally for Further Rescue Efforts*

Just prior to receiving the TDY RSO's distress call shortly after 2142 local, the head of Annex security heard multiple explosions coming from the north in the direction of the SMC. The Annex security head immediately began to organize his team's departure and notified his superiors, who began to contact local security elements to request support. The Annex response team departed its compound in two vehicles at approximately 2205 local. The departure of the Annex team was not delayed by orders from superiors; the team leader decided on his own to depart the Annex compound once it was apparent, despite a brief delay to permit their continuing efforts, that rapid support from local security elements was not forthcoming.

While the TDY RSO continued to man the TOC and communicate with Tripoli, the Annex, and Washington, ARSO 2 used a smoke grenade to obscure his movements from the TOC to Villa B, where he joined ARSOs 3 and 4 who were barricaded inside. By this point, the first group of attackers appeared to have receded. The three ARSOs then drove an armored vehicle parked outside of the TOC to Villa C, where they assisted ARSO 1, who was in distress on the roof, vomiting from severe smoke inhalation and losing consciousness. ARSOs 2, 3, and 4 repeatedly entered Villa C through the egress window, at times crawling on their hands and knees through the safe area due to heavy smoke and the lack of air and visibility.

Near the SMC, the Annex team hoped to bring along friendly forces from militia compounds located along their route. The Annex team stopped at the intersection to the west of the C1 entrance and attempted to convince militia members there to assist. There was periodic, ineffective small arms fire in the team's location from the direction of the Special Mission.

Unable to secure additional assistance, the team moved on to the SMC. The February 17 living quarters and adjacent vehicles were burned, and heavy smoke

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was pouring out of the still smoldering Villa C. The Annex team made contact with the four ARSOs at Villa C. Some Annex team members went to retrieve the TDY RSO from the TOC, while other Annex team members joined the ARSOs in their search for the Ambassador.

During their searches of the Villa C safe area, the ARSOs found and removed the body of IMO Smith with Annex security team assistance. The team checked for vital signs and verified that IMO Smith was already deceased, apparently due to smoke inhalation. Other Annex security team members and the TDY RSO joined up with the ARSOs again to enter Villa C via the egress window but were unable to locate Ambassador Stevens despite multiple attempts. Heat and smoke continued to be limiting factors in their ability to move farther into the safe area. When the TDY RSO attempted to enter Villa C through the front door, the ceiling collapsed. During these rescue attempts, an ARSO received a severe laceration to his arm.

*Second Phase Attack on the Compound, Evacuation to the Annex*

At the urging of the Annex security team and friendly militia members, who warned that the compound was at risk of being overrun, the TDY RSO and four ARSOs departed for the Annex without having found Ambassador Stevens. As the Annex team provided cover fire, the five DS agents' fully armored vehicle departed and took hostile fire as they left the SMC and turned right out of the C1 entrance. The driver, ARSO 1, reversed direction to avoid a crowd farther down the street, then reverted back to the original easterly route towards the crowd after a man whom the DS agents believed to be with February 17 signaled them to do so. Farther ahead, another man in a small group of individuals then motioned to them to enter a neighboring compound, some 300 meters to the east of the C1 entrance of the Special Mission compound. The DS agents suspected a trap, ignored this signal, and continued past. The group along the route then opened fire at the vehicle's side, shattering and almost penetrating the armored glass and blowing out two tires. While the identities of the individuals who fired upon the DS agents is unknown, they may have been part of the initial wave of attackers who swarmed the SMC earlier that night. A roadblock was present outside this compound and groups of attackers were seen entering it at about the time this vehicle movement was taking place.

ARSO 1 accelerated past the armed crowd and navigated around another crowd and roadblock near the end of the road, driving down the center median and

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into the oncoming lane at one point to bypass stopped traffic. Two cars followed, with one turning off and the other following them with its lights off until it turned into a warehouse area not far from the Annex. The DS vehicle then proceeded to the Annex, arriving around 2330 local. There the ARSOs joined Annex personnel and took up defensive positions, to await the Annex security and Tripoli response team. The situation was relatively quiet. Wounded personnel received medical support.

Back at the SMC, the Annex security team at Villa C used small arms fire and took defensive positions to respond to an apparent second phase attack, which lasted about 15 minutes and included small arms fire and at least three rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) launched from outside the C3 gate. With their many and repeated attempts to retrieve the Ambassador having proven fruitless and militia members warning them the SMC could not be held much longer, the Annex team departed the SMC, carrying with them the body of IMO Smith. They arrived back at the Annex and moved to take up additional defensive positions.

*Embassy Tripoli Response*

Upon notification of the attack from the TDY RSO around 2145 local, Embassy Tripoli set up a command center and notified Washington. About 2150 local, the DCM was able to reach Ambassador Stevens, who briefly reported that the SMC was under attack before the call cut off. The Embassy notified Benina Airbase in Benghazi of a potential need for logistic support and aircraft for extraction and received full cooperation. The DCM contacted the Libyan President and Prime Minister's offices to urge them to mobilize a rescue effort, and kept Washington apprised of post's efforts. The Embassy also reached out to Libyan Air Force and Armed Forces contacts, February 17 leadership, and UN and third country embassies, among others. Within hours, Embassy Tripoli chartered a private airplane and deployed a seven-person security team, which included two U.S. military personnel, to Benghazi.

At the direction of the U.S. military's Africa Command (AFRICOM), DoD moved a remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft which arrived over the SMC shortly before the DS team departed. A second remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft relieved the first, and monitored the eventual evacuation of personnel from the Annex to Benghazi airport later on the morning of September 12.

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*Uncertainty on Ambassador Stevens' Whereabouts*

U.S. efforts to determine Ambassador Stevens' whereabouts were unsuccessful for several hours. At approximately 0200 local, Embassy Tripoli received a phone call from ARSO 1's cell phone, which he had given to the Ambassador while they were sheltered in the safe area. A male, Arabic-speaking caller said an unresponsive male who matched the physical description of the Ambassador was at a hospital. There was confusion over which hospital this might be, and the caller was unable to provide a picture of the Ambassador or give any other proof that he was with him. There was some concern that the call might be a ruse to lure American personnel into a trap. With the Benghazi Medical Center (BMC) believed to be dangerous for American personnel due to the possibility attackers were being treated there, a Libyan contact of the Special Mission was dispatched to the BMC and later confirmed the Ambassador's identity and that he was deceased.

BMC personnel would later report that at approximately 0115 local on September 12, an unidentified, unresponsive male foreigner – subsequently identified as Ambassador Stevens – was brought to the emergency room by six civilians. The identities of these civilians are unknown at the time of this report, but to the best knowledge of the Board these were “good Samaritans” among the hordes of looters and bystanders who descended upon the Special Mission after the DS and Annex teams departed. With the clearing of smoke, Ambassador Stevens' rescuers found him within a room in the safe area of Villa C, did not know his identity, pulled him out through an egress window, and sought medical attention for him. Although the Ambassador did not show signs of life upon arrival at the BMC, doctors attempted to resuscitate him for some 45 minutes before declaring him deceased, by apparent smoke inhalation.

*Attacks on the Annex*

Just before midnight, shortly after the DS and Annex security teams arrived from the SMC, the Annex began to be targeted by gunfire and RPGs, which continued intermittently for an hour. Annex security personnel engaged from their defensive positions, which were reinforced by DS agents. Other personnel remained in contact with Embassy Tripoli from the Annex.

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The seven-person response team from Embassy Tripoli arrived in Benghazi to lend support. It arrived at the Annex about 0500 local. Less than fifteen minutes later, the Annex came under mortar and RPG attack, with five mortar rounds impacting close together in under 90 seconds. Three rounds hit the roof of an Annex building, killing security officers Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty. The attack also severely injured one ARSO and one Annex security team member. Annex, Tripoli, and ARSO security team members at other locations moved rapidly to provide combat first aid to the injured.

At approximately 0630 local, all U.S. government personnel evacuated with support from a quasi-governmental Libyan militia. They arrived at the airport without incident. The DoD unarmed surveillance aircraft provided visual oversight during the evacuation. Embassy Tripoli lost communication with the convoy at one point during transit, but quickly regained it.

Evacuees, including all wounded personnel, departed Benghazi on the chartered jet at approximately 0730 local. Embassy Tripoli staff, including the Embassy nurse, met the first evacuation flight at Tripoli International Airport. Wounded personnel were transferred to a local hospital, in exemplary coordination that helped save the lives of two severely injured Americans.

Embassy Tripoli worked with the Libyan government to have a Libyan Air Force C-130 take the remaining U.S. government personnel from Benghazi to Tripoli. Two American citizen State Department contractors traveled to the airport and linked up with the remaining U.S. government personnel. While awaiting transport, the TDY RSO and Annex personnel continued to reach out to Libyan contacts to coordinate the transport of the presumed remains of Ambassador Stevens to the airport. The body was brought to the airport in what appeared to be a local ambulance at 0825 local, and the TDY RSO verified Ambassador Stevens' identity.

At 1130 local, September 12, 2012, the Libyan government-provided C-130 evacuation flight landed in Tripoli with the last U.S. government personnel from Benghazi and the remains of the four Americans killed, who were transported to a local hospital.

In coordination with the State Department and Embassy Tripoli, the Department of Defense sent two U.S. Air Force planes (a C-17 and a C-130) from Germany to Tripoli to provide medical evacuation support for the wounded. At 1915 local on September 12, Embassy Tripoli evacuees, Benghazi personnel, and

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those wounded in the attacks departed Tripoli on the C-17 aircraft, with military doctors and nurses aboard providing en route medical care to the injured. The aircraft arrived at Ramstein Air Force Base at approximately 2230 (Tripoli time) on September 12, just over 24 hours after the attacks in Benghazi had commenced.

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## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

- 1. The attacks in Benghazi were security-related, resulting in the deaths of four U.S. personnel after terrorists attacked two separate U.S. government facilities – the Special Mission compound (SMC) and the Annex.**

Identification of the perpetrators and their motivations are the subject of an ongoing FBI criminal investigation. The Board concluded that no protest took place before the Special Mission and Annex attacks, which were unanticipated in their scale and intensity.

### ADEQUACY OF SECURITY SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 11, 2012

- 2. Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.**

Through the course of its inquiry, the Board interviewed over 100 individuals, reviewed thousands of pages of documents, and viewed hours of video footage. On the basis of its comprehensive review of this information, the Board remains fully convinced that responsibility for the tragic loss of life, injuries, and damage to U.S. facilities and property rests solely and completely with the terrorists who perpetrated the attack.

### Overriding Factors

This is not to say, however, that there are no lessons to be learned. A recurring theme throughout the Board's work was one also touched upon by the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam ARBs in 1999. Simply put, in the months leading up to September 11, 2012, security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a "shared responsibility" in Washington, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security. Key decisions, such as the extension of the State Department presence in Benghazi until December 2012, or non-decisions in Washington, such as the failure to establish standards for Benghazi and to meet them, or the lack of a cohesive staffing plan, essentially set up Benghazi as a

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floating TDY platform with successive principal officers often confined to the SMC due to threats and inadequate resources, and RSOs resorting to field-expedient solutions to correct security shortfalls.

Communication, cooperation, and coordination between Washington, Tripoli, and Benghazi occurred collegially at the working-level but were constrained by a lack of transparency, responsiveness, and leadership at senior bureau levels. The DS Bureau's action officers who worked on Libya are to be commended for their efforts within DS and across the Department to provide additional security resources to Benghazi. Action officers in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' (NEA) Office of Maghreb Affairs and Executive Office showed similar dedication in collaborating on solutions with their DS counterparts and responding to TDY staffing demands. However, in DS, NEA, and at post, there appeared to be very real confusion over who, ultimately, was responsible and empowered to make decisions based on both policy and security considerations.

The DS Bureau showed a lack of proactive senior leadership with respect to Benghazi, failing to ensure that the priority security needs of a high risk, high threat post were met. At the same time, with attention in late 2011 shifting to growing crises in Egypt and Syria, the NEA Bureau's front office showed a lack of ownership of Benghazi's security issues, and a tendency to rely totally on DS for the latter. The Board also found that Embassy Tripoli leadership, saddled with their own staffing and security challenges, did not single out a special need for increased security for Benghazi.

Further shortfalls in Washington coordination were manifested by the flawed process by which Special Mission Benghazi's extension until the end of December 2012 was approved, a decision that did not take security considerations adequately into account. The result was the continuation of Special Mission Benghazi with an uncertain future and a one-year expiration date that made allocations of resources for security upgrades and personnel assignments difficult.

Another key driver behind the weak security platform in Benghazi was the decision to treat Benghazi as a temporary, residential facility, not officially notified to the host government, even though it was also a full time office facility. This resulted in the Special Mission compound being excepted from office facility standards and accountability under the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (SECCA) and the Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB). Benghazi's initial platform in November 2011 was far short of OSPB

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standards and remained so even in September 2012, despite multiple field-expedient upgrades funded by DS. (As a temporary, residential facility, SMC was not eligible for OBO-funded security upgrades.) A comprehensive upgrade and risk-mitigation plan did not exist, nor was a comprehensive security review conducted by Washington for Benghazi in 2012. The unique circumstances surrounding the creation of the mission in Benghazi as a temporary mission outside the realm of permanent diplomatic posts resulted in significant disconnects and support gaps.

Personnel

The Board found the short-term, transitory nature of Benghazi's staffing to be another primary driver behind the inadequate security platform in Benghazi. Staffing was at times woefully insufficient considering post's security posture and high risk, high threat environment. The end result was a lack of institutional knowledge and mission capacity which could not be overcome by talent and hard work alone, although the Board found ample evidence of both in those who served there. The situation was exacerbated by the lack of Locally Employed Staff (LES) who would normally provide a backstop of continuity, local knowledge, and language ability. This staffing "churn" had significant detrimental effects on the post's ability to assess adequately both the political and security environment, as well as to provide the necessary advocacy and follow-through on major, essential security upgrades.

The Board determined that DS staffing levels in Benghazi after Embassy Tripoli re-opened were inadequate, decreasing significantly after then-Special Envoy Stevens' departure in November 2011. Although a full complement of five DS agents for Benghazi was initially projected, and later requested multiple times, Special Mission Benghazi achieved a level of five DS agents (not counting DoD-provided TDY Site Security Team personnel sent by Embassy Tripoli) for only 23 days between January 1-September 9, 2012.

As it became clear that DS would not provide a steady complement of five TDY DS agents to Benghazi, expectations on the ground were lowered by the daunting task of gaining approvals and the reality of an ever-shifting DS personnel platform. From discussions with former Benghazi-based staff, Board members concluded that the persistence of DS leadership in Washington in refusing to provide a steady platform of four to five DS agents created a resignation on the

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part of post about asking for more. The TDY DS agents resorted to doing the best they could with the limited resources provided.

Furthermore, DS's reliance on volunteers for TDY positions meant that the ARSOs in Benghazi often had relatively little or no prior DS program management or overseas experience. For a time, more experienced RSOs were sent out on longer term TDYs, but even that appeared to diminish after June 2012, exactly at the time the security environment in Benghazi was deteriorating further. It bears emphasizing, however, that the Board found the work done by these often junior DS agents to be exemplary. But given the threat environment and with very little operational oversight from more experienced, senior colleagues, combined with an under-resourced security platform, these agents were not well served by their leadership in Washington. The lack of Arabic-language skills among most American personnel assigned to Benghazi and the lack of a dedicated LES interpreter and sufficient local staff also served as a barrier to effective communication and situational awareness at the Special Mission.

Required security training for DS agents prior to service in Benghazi consisted of the High Threat Training Course (HTTC). However, domestically-based DS agents who had not served abroad did not have the opportunity to receive RSO training before serving in Benghazi. In addition, after April 2012 all personnel scheduled to serve in Libya for over 30 days were required to take the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat (FACT) training. IMOs, who also served as the "management officer" at post, did not, as a prerequisite, receive any basic management or General Services Officer (GSO) training to prepare them for their duties.

The Board determined that reliance on February 17 for security in the event of an attack was misplaced, even though February 17 had been considered to have responded satisfactorily to previous, albeit less threatening, incidents. The four assigned February 17 guards were insufficient and did not have the requisite skills and reliability to provide a reasonable level of security on a 24/7 basis for an eight-acre compound with an extended perimeter wall. In the days prior to the attack and on September 11, 2012, one was absent. Over the course of its inquiry, the Board also learned of troubling indicators of February 17's loyalties and its readiness to assist U.S. personnel. In the weeks preceding the Ambassador's arrival, February 17 had complained about salaries and the lack of a contract for its personnel. At the time of the attacks, February 17 had ceased accompanying Special Mission vehicle movements in protest. The Blue Mountain Libya (BML)

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unarmed guards, whose primary responsibilities were to provide early warning and control access to the SMC, were also poorly skilled.

*Physical Security*

Given the threat environment, the physical security platform in Benghazi was inadequate. It is incumbent upon the Board, however, to acknowledge that several upgrades and repairs took place over 2012. DS provided additional funding for the Local Guard Force (LGF), February 17, and residential security upgrades, including heightening the outer perimeter wall, safety grills on safe area egress windows that helped save the life of ARSO 1 on the night of September 11, concrete jersey barriers, manual drop-arm vehicle barriers, a steel gate for the Villa C safe area, some locally manufactured steel doors, sandbag fortifications, security cameras, some additional security lighting, guard booths, and an Internal Defense Notification System. Because OBO does not fund security upgrades for “temporary” facilities, DS also identified non-traditional funding streams to fund physical security upgrades and worked with the IMOs, NEA and Embassy Tripoli to move funds and supplies to Benghazi. The Engineering Security Office (ESO) in Cairo provided strong technical support and regularly visited. Following the June 2012 IED incident, which blew a large hole in the compound wall, DS, OBO, Tripoli, NEA and ESO Cairo immediately responded to Benghazi’s request for assistance. Tripoli identified OBO funds that could be used to fix the wall, and ESO Cairo traveled to Benghazi on June 8 to provide technical support. The TDY IMOs worked tirelessly with the RSOs, Tripoli procurement and financial management staff, and Libyan professionals on statements of work, contracts and funding for the emergency repair of the SMC wall and for the other physical security upgrades, as well as ongoing electrical repairs. New upgrades remained a challenge, however, due to a lack of cash reserves and contract and procurement expertise, which meant Benghazi had to rely on Tripoli for further processing.

The Board found, however, that Washington showed a tendency to overemphasize the positive impact of physical security upgrades, which were often field-expedient improvements to a profoundly weak platform, while generally failing to meet Benghazi’s repeated requests to augment the numbers of TDY DS personnel. The insufficient Special Mission compound security platform was at variance with the appropriate Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) standards with respect to perimeter, interior security, and safe areas. Benghazi was also under-resourced with regard to certain needed security equipment.

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### Security Planning

Post and the Department were well aware of the anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, although DS did not issue a worldwide caution cable to posts related to the anniversary. Ambassador Stevens and his DS agents had taken the anniversary into account by deciding to hold all meetings at the SMC that day rather than making any moves outside.

The Ambassador chose to travel to Benghazi that week, independent of Washington, as per standard practice. Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as a staffing gap between principal officers in Benghazi. His trip had been put off earlier in the summer, and the September 10-14 dates were not decided upon well in advance. The Board found that plans for the Ambassador's trip provided for minimal close protection security support, and that Embassy country team members were not fully aware of planned movements off compound. The Ambassador did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. Mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer 2012. His status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.

### IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES ON SEPTEMBER 11-12, 2012

**3. Notwithstanding the proper implementation of security systems and procedures and remarkable heroism shown by American personnel, those systems themselves and the Libyan response fell short in the face of a series of attacks that began with the sudden penetration of the Special Mission compound by dozens of armed attackers.** In short, Americans in Benghazi and their Tripoli colleagues did their best with what they had, which, in the end, was not enough to prevent the loss of lives of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty. At the same time, U.S. security professionals prevented a further loss of life and helped ensure the safe evacuation of remaining American personnel in Benghazi 12 hours after the attacks began.

As noted in the preceding section, physical security at the Special Mission was insufficient. The SMC perimeter was breached immediately, providing no reaction time to the five DS agents on compound. There was no advance warning regarding the group of attackers approaching outside the SMC prior to the attack,

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and no sign of them on surveillance cameras outside the C1 gate until the attack was underway. The Board learned that, as of the time of the attacks, the Special Mission compound had received additional surveillance cameras, which remained in boxes uninstalled, as technical support to install them had not yet visited post. In addition, the camera monitor in the local guard force booth next to the C1 gate was inoperable on the day of the attacks, a repair which also awaited the arrival of a technical team.

Some aspects of physical security upgrades did perform as intended – in particular, the safe area in Villa C, which prevented intruders from entering and the TOC door, which protected the DS agents from attackers trying to enter. Also, the installation of exits in the window grates of the Villa C safe area allowed ARSO 1 to escape the fire, and those exits were the entry point for him and other DS agents and Annex personnel to make multiple attempts to rescue and recover Sean Smith and Ambassador Stevens.

The Board found the responses by both BML and February 17 to be inadequate. No BML guards were present outside the compound immediately before the attack ensued, although perimeter security was one of their responsibilities, and there is conflicting information as to whether they sounded any alarms prior to fleeing the C1 gate area to other areas of the SMC. Although the unarmed BML guards could not be expected to repel an attack, they had core responsibility for providing early warning and controlling access to the compound, which they had not always performed well in the past. In the final analysis, the Board could not determine exactly how the C1 gate at the Special Mission compound was breached, but the speed with which attackers entered raised the possibility that BML guards left the C1 pedestrian gate open after initially seeing the attackers and fleeing the vicinity. They had left the gate unlatched before.

The Board's inquiry found little evidence that the armed February 17 guards alerted Americans at the SMC to the attack or summoned a February 17 militia presence to assist expeditiously once the attack was in progress – despite the fact that February 17 members were paid to provide interior security and a quick reaction force for the SMC and the fact that February 17 barracks were in the close vicinity, less than 2 km away from the SMC. A small number of February 17 militia members arrived at Villa C nearly an hour after the attack began. Although some February 17 members assisted in efforts to search for Ambassador Stevens in the smoke-filled Villa C building, the Board found little evidence that February 17

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contributed meaningfully to the defense of the Special Mission compound, or to the evacuation to the airport that took place on the morning of September 12.

In contrast, DS and Annex personnel on the ground in Benghazi performed with courage and an overriding desire to protect and rescue their colleagues, in a near impossible situation. The multiple trips that the DS agents and Annex security team members made into a burning, smoke-filled building in attempts to rescue Sean Smith and Ambassador Stevens showed readiness to risk life and limb to save others. They ultimately were unable to save Sean Smith and Ambassador Stevens, due to the intensity of the heat and smoke and a lack of resources, including breathing apparatus. The DS agents' decision to depart the SMC without the Ambassador came after they had all suffered smoke inhalation due to multiple rescue attempts, and amidst a renewed attack that continued as they departed the compound. The Board members believe every possible effort was made to protect, rescue, and recover Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith, and that the bravery of the DS agents present in Benghazi helped prevent a further loss of life, particularly given their assistance in defending the Annex.

The Board found that the lack of non-lethal crowd control options also precluded a more vigorous defense of the SMC. The Board also determined that the lack of fire safety equipment severely impacted the Ambassador's and Sean Smith's ability to escape the deadly smoke conditions. On the other hand, the DS agents' tactical driving training, as well as their fully-armored vehicle, saved their lives when they were attacked by weapons fire en route from the SMC to the Annex. In addition, the DS emergency medical training and the DS-issued personal medical kit saved an ARSO's life after he was severely injured by a mortar attack at the Annex.

The Board found the Libyan government's response to be profoundly lacking on the night of the attacks, reflecting both weak capacity and a near total absence of central government influence in Benghazi. The Libyan government did facilitate assistance from a quasi-governmental militia that supported the evacuation of U.S. government personnel to Benghazi airport. It also facilitated the departure of the charter plane carrying the Tripoli rescue team to Benghazi, and provided a Libyan Air Force C-130 that was used to evacuate remaining personnel and the bodies of the deceased from Benghazi on the morning of September 12.

Washington-Tripoli-Benghazi communication, cooperation, and coordination on the night of the attacks were effective, despite multiple channels of

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communication among Washington, Tripoli, Benghazi, and AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, as well as multiple channels of communication within Washington itself. Embassy Tripoli served as a lifeline to Benghazi throughout the attacks, marshalling support from Washington, Stuttgart and elsewhere, including quickly organizing the charter plane that sent the seven-person reinforcement team to Benghazi. At the direction of AFRICOM, DoD moved a remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft to Benghazi, which arrived over the SMC shortly before the DS team departed. A second remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft relieved the first, and monitored the eventual evacuation of personnel from the Annex to Benghazi airport later on the morning of September 12.

Embassy Tripoli staff showed absolute dedication and teamwork in mobilizing to respond to the crisis, with the DCM, DATT, Political, and other country team sections reaching out to a wide range of contacts in Tripoli and Benghazi to secure support; the Public Affairs team monitoring social media sites and recording a log of Mission calls; the Embassy nurse providing invaluable guidance on caring for the wounded evacuated from Benghazi; and a Consular officer donating blood that helped save the life of a wounded colleague. Throughout the crisis, the Acting NEA Assistant Secretary provided crucial leadership guidance to Embassy Tripoli's DCM, and Embassy Tripoli's RSO offered valuable counsel to the DS agents in Benghazi.

The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time given the speed of the attacks for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference. Senior-level interagency discussions were underway soon after Washington received initial word of the attacks and continued through the night. The Board found no evidence of any undue delays in decision making or denial of support from Washington or from the military combatant commanders. Quite the contrary: the safe evacuation of all U.S. government personnel from Benghazi twelve hours after the initial attack and subsequently to Ramstein Air Force Base was the result of exceptional U.S. government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans. In addition, at the State Department's request, the Department of Defense also provided a Marine FAST (Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team) as additional security support for Embassy Tripoli on September 12.

Overall, communication systems on the night of the attacks worked, with a near-constant information flow among Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington. Cell phones were the main method of contact, but lacked redundancy. Radio

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communications between the Annex and the SMC also worked well, thanks to prior coordination between the two.

Shortly after receiving the initial notification from Embassy Tripoli at approximately 1545 EST, the State Department Operations Center notified the interagency, including the White House, of the Special Mission attack by secure conference call and email alerts. The Operations Center and the Diplomatic Security Command Center (DSCC) were exemplary in eliciting information from Tripoli- and Benghazi-based colleagues without overloading them.

IMPACT OF INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION AVAILABILITY

**4. The Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11 attacks. Known gaps existed in the intelligence community's understanding of extremist militias in Libya and the potential threat they posed to U.S. interests, although some threats were known to exist.**

Terrorist networks are difficult to monitor, and the Board emphasizes the conclusion of previous accountability review boards that vulnerable missions cannot rely on receiving specific warning intelligence. Similarly, the lack of specific threat intelligence does not imply a lessening of probability of a terrorist attack. The Board found that there was a tendency on the part of policy, security and other U.S. government officials to rely heavily on the probability of warning intelligence and on the absence of specific threat information. The result was possibly to overlook the usefulness of taking a hard look at accumulated, sometimes circumstantial information, and instead to fail to appreciate threats and understand trends, particularly based on increased violence and the targeting of foreign diplomats and international organizations in Benghazi. The latter information failed to come into clear relief against a backdrop of the lack of effective governance, widespread and growing political violence and instability and the ready availability of weapons in eastern Libya. There were U.S. assessments that provided situational awareness on the persistent, general threat to U.S. and Western interests in eastern Libya, including Benghazi. Board members, however, were struck by the lack of discussion focused specifically on Benghazi.

Benghazi's threat environment had been generally deteriorating since the "gelatina" bomb was thrown over the SMC fence on April 6, but was not judged to have reached a critical point before September 11. The July 7 elections, about

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which there had been some trepidation regarding the security situation, passed with less violence than expected and were followed by Ramadan, when incidents are usually lower. Before September 11, a patchwork of militias in Benghazi had assumed many, if not all, of the security functions normally associated with central government organs, as the government had little authority or reach in Benghazi. There seemed to be no attempt, however, to link formally the many anti-Western incidents in Benghazi, the general declarations of threat in U.S. assessments and a proliferation of violence-prone and little understood militias, the lack of any central authority and a general perception of a deteriorating security environment to any more specific and timely analysis of the threat to U.S. government facilities.

Board members found that there was little understanding of militias in Benghazi and the threat they posed to U.S. interests. One prime factor behind this knowledge gap was that eastern Libya is home to many militias, which are constantly dissolving, splitting apart and reforming. Furthermore, many individuals are associated with more than one militia. Understanding of February 17, in particular, was further limited by the fact that it is an umbrella organization, made up of many different militias with differing ideologies, some of which are extremist in nature.

The Board determined there were no warnings from Libyan interlocutors.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF PERSONNEL

**5. The Board found that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus in critical positions of authority and responsibility in Washington demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability** appropriate for the State Department's senior ranks in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. However, the Board did not find that any individual U.S. Government employee engaged in misconduct or willfully ignored his or her responsibilities, and, therefore did not find reasonable cause to believe that an individual breached his or her duty so as to be the subject of a recommendation for disciplinary action.

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# **INTERVIEW OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #4**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 16, 2015

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

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FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*

FOR MR. \* \* \*

RAEKA SAFAI

Ms. Jackson. All right. We'll go on the record.

This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] -- [REDACTED] -- conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi.

This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks of the U.S. Diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and matters related to it, pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Agent [REDACTED], could you give us your full name for the record, please.

Mr. [REDACTED]. My name is [REDACTED].

Ms. Jackson. Let me first start off by saying that we appreciate your appearance today, that you've agreed to voluntarily do this interview.

Again, my name is Sharon Jackson. I'm with the committee's majority staff. And we'll go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves and state their relationship to this interview so that you have an idea of who is in the room and the official reporter can get that down.

To your left.

Ms. Safai. Raeka Safai, Counsel for Mr. [REDACTED].

Mr. Evers. Austin Evers, State Department.

Mr. Beattie. Brien Beattie for the committee.

Ms. Rauch. Laura Rauch, Senior Professional Staff, Select

Committee on Benghazi.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer, Chief Counsel for the minority staff.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority staff.

Ms. Jackson. You, too.

Mr. Westmoreland. Lynn Westmoreland from Georgia's Third District.

Mr. Davis. Carlton Davis. I work for Mr. Gowdy.

Ms. Clarke. Sheria Clarke, majority staff.

Mr. Chipman. Dana Chipman. I work on the majority staff.

Ms. Barrineau. Sara Barrineau with the majority staff.

Ms. Betz. Kim Betz with the majority staff.

Ms. Jackson. Agent [REDACTED], before we begin, I'd like to go over the ground rules and explain the procedures that we're going to employ today.

The way that the questioning proceeds before this committee is that a member from the majority will ask questions for up to 1 hour and then the minority will have the opportunity to ask questions for an equal amount of time if they choose to do so.

We generally adhere to the 1-hour time limit for each side. We've had some variations by agreement, but that's generally what you should expect.

Questions may only be asked by a Member of Congress or a member of the committee. And we'll rotate back and forth until each side has exhausted all of the questions that they would like to ask for you.



Unlike testimony or deposition that you may have experienced in Federal or State court, the committee format is not that formal and not bound by the Rules of Evidence.

You or your counsel may raise an objection for privilege, and that is subject to review by the chairman of the committee. If those objections cannot be resolved during the interview, you can be required to return for a deposition or a hearing.

Members and staff of the committee, however, cannot raise objections. And so, again, you and your counsel can raise objections, but no one else can raise objections to the questions that are being asked. We've not really had a problem with this in the past, but I just wanted to make sure that you know how we're going to proceed.

This session is an unclassified session. We can make arrangements to go into a classified session. However, I think most of the information that will be asked of you will not require a classified answer based on the documents we've reviewed from the State Department.

Certainly, like, if you testified before the grand jury or anything like that, that's an unclassified setting. So that can kind of be a gauge as to -- if you're expected to testify about it in court or before the grand jury, that would be a good barometer of whether it's classified or not.

But if you believe that any answer to a question that is posed to you would divulge classified information, we ask that you just say so, and we can either withdraw that question or withhold it until we

move into a classified setting.

You are welcome to confer with your counsel at any time during the interview, and we will allot you whatever amount of time and the number of times that you would want to confer with your counsel. But if it's just a matter of you need a question clarified or you didn't hear all of it and missed part of it, please first ask if it can be restated or repeated so that we make sure that you understand fully the question that is posed to you.

So if at any time you just want something either -- maybe it's a compound question and you want it separated out into its component parts or you just missed part of it. Just please ask us to restate it. Because the most important thing, as you well know, is that you understand the question before you give your answer.

We will, additionally, take a break whenever it's convenient or you would like one. Generally, we have gone for the first hour of questioning and then we take maybe a 10-, 15-minute break. Then we go for a second hour. At that time, if we think we're close to being finished, we may just plow on. Otherwise, we'll take a break for lunch and then resume in the afternoon.

As you can see, there's an official reporter taking down the proceedings here today so that everything we say today will be in a written record. One of the things, as you well know from perhaps testifying before, is that it's very important to answer out loud, no nodding, shaking of the head. It drives the reporters crazy. But we invite the reporter to speak up if she hasn't caught an answer.

The other thing for the reporter's sake is that we should wait until each other finishes before we start talking. So I will do my best to not interrupt any of your answers with the next question. And, if you could, be cognizant of the fact that the question needs to finish before you start your answer.

We are here today because this committee is investigating the attacks that occurred in Benghazi and matters related to it and it is understood that you have direct knowledge of that. So we're going to ask that you give us your best recollection today.

If you don't fully recall an incident, please tell us as much as you can remember. If there was someone else who was present at the time that may have also direct knowledge of that, please identify that person for us. However, if you just don't recollect a particular question -- the answer to a particular question, please say so. We know that a matter of -- a number of years have passed, memories fade, and recollections are not 100 percent after the fact.

Do you understand that you have to answer questions from Congress truthfully?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. And do you also understand that that applies to a committee as well as to Congress directly?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Do you understand -- and I'm sure you do, being a federal law enforcement agent -- that any witness who provides false testimony is subject to penalties for perjury and making false

statements? Do you understand that?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

Ms. Jackson. You've probably advised a few people of that in your time.

As you sit here today, is there any reason that you would be unable to provide truthful testify to this committee today?

Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. It is our understanding that you are here with counsel today.

And your counsel is whom?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Ms. Raeka Safai.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. We also understand that you have affirmatively requested a member of the State Department's counsel to be present today. Is that correct?

Mr. [REDACTED]. That is correct.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. All right. Well, that's the end of my preamble on kind of the process.

Do you have any questions regarding the process that we're going to follow here today?

Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Does the minority have anything that they'd like to add?

Ms. Sawyer. Just briefly. Good morning. Welcome. Thank you for being here.

In addition to the request from Mr. [REDACTED] counsel, there was

also a request for the Department of Justice to be able to attend. The ranking member has supported that request. They had requested to be here just to make sure that they could safeguard the law enforcement issues at stake. I'm assuming that that request has not been abandoned. Is that the case?

Ms. Safai. Correct.

Ms. Sawyer. So, again, you know, we were very grateful that the chairman agreed to accommodate both the witness's and the witness's counsel's request to have the State Department present based on the fact they have not in any way interfered with this committee's ability to ask any and all questions it would like or with the witness's ability to answer those fully and truthfully.

We think the same is true of the Justice Department. So we would ask that you convey the ranking member's request once again for the chairman to reconsider and allow them to be present.

Another request that has been made by counsel for Mr. [REDACTED] was that we conduct the interview in a classified setting from the outset. Again, the ranking member supports that request as well. I know that the majority has represented that we may not need to go to the classified setting.

Certainly, Mr. [REDACTED], you should feel free to let us know there is information that you would feel more comfortable sharing in a classified setting.

Last time, I would note, that when we -- we did not discuss at all the night of the attacks in an unclassified setting out of respect

for not having the burden put on the witness to police that line. So I would hope that we would at least provide the same accommodations here.

Ms. Safai. If I may add something -- and I apologize. I may need a cough drop -- in addition to the ability for Mr. [REDACTED] to answer the questions fully without being concerned of disclosing any material that's classified, there's a huge concern about Mr. [REDACTED] name getting out there.

His name has been put out there publicly before once or twice and, as a result, he's been contacted by reporters. His family has been -- there have been several attempts made to interview his family. And so we would ask that we move to a classified setting now in order to protect his name from getting leaked.

Ms. Jackson. Well, first of all, from a legal standpoint, we would disagree with your assessment that moving to a classified setting protects his identity. We just disagree that, fundamentally, that will do -- all a classified setting does is add one step of having the transcript reviewed by a classification authority, who makes the determination whether specific information is classified or not, and then the transcript is released. So moving into a classified setting does nothing to protect his identity.

But as you have been told and as the State Department has been told by both members of this committee and by majority staff, we have no intention at all of putting Agent [REDACTED] or any other agent at risk in this and we'll take steps to protect his identity. And I don't

believe that his identity has been leaked at all by any member of this committee or any member of the staff of this committee. And we have made all of those assurances along the way. And if you -- I'd be interested in any legal authority that you could cite that says that a classified setting would absolutely be a protection.

We also understand that there is an overall concern throughout the country of over-classifying information and that we are all to guard against that. Certainly, if the attack is going to be discussed in an upcoming prosecution, that information would not be classified.

Certainly it's probably not classified at this point. Certainly there's enough been written publicly about the attack. And so we don't believe that the great majority of the details regarding the attack are classified at this point. I anticipate that we will be discussing the attack in an unclassified setting here.

But, again, this committee appreciates what you have done as an agent, what you're going to continue to do as an agent, and you have our assurance that we are here to protect you and your family's safety as well as your colleagues'.

Ms. Safai. If I may respond, it's my understanding that being in a classified setting makes the repercussions for leaking any transcript that much more serious. So I would ask you to take that into consideration.

Additionally, the previous interview we conducted was moved to a classified setting. I would ask that Mr. [REDACTED] be given the same respect and the same procedures that were used with his colleagues.

Ms. Jackson. Well, we will properly move to a classified setting to the extent that we have classified information that needs to be discussed there. But we will try and do as much of this interview in an unclassified setting as possible.

Agent [REDACTED], do you have any further questions regarding the process and procedure?

Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

Ms. Jackson. All right. I see that the clock now is about 10:23. So we'll begin the first hour of questioning.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Agent [REDACTED], when did you become a Diplomatic Security agent?

A I joined DSS on [REDACTED] of 2010.

Q And did you have any prior military or law enforcement experience before you became an DS agent?

A Yes. I was in the United States Army.

Q Okay. And for approximately how long?

A Well, I joined the Army -- I believe it would have been in the fall [REDACTED].

Q And did you serve continuously until you became a DS agent?

A No. I had a -- my ETS from Active-Duty service and then transitioned into the Reserves. And there was a period of about a year between when I left Active-Duty service and joined the State Department.



Q And when you were on Active Duty in the U.S. Army, where did you serve?

A I was in [REDACTED]. I was also stationed at [REDACTED]. And I served in Iraq in support of our operations there from approximately [REDACTED] to [REDACTED].

Q Okay. Since joining the Diplomatic Security Service in 2010, what have been your various assignments?

A Initially, I was assigned to the [REDACTED] field office. In the [REDACTED] field office, we have a variety of duties. We investigate visa and passport fraud as well as providing protective services for foreign dignitaries and State Department officials. I participated in a number of those details as well as working overseas on the Secretary's detail and my TDY in Benghazi, Libya.

Q Was your assignment in Benghazi your first overseas assignment other than providing -- for being a part of the Secretary's protection detail?

A Yes.

Q I may have --

A Yeah.

Q Okay.

A I believe so. In the role of a temporary duty regional security officer would have been any first assignment.

Q But you certainly have been overseas any number of times as -- providing protection for the Secretary of State?

A Correct.

Q Okay. And where were some of those places that you went with the Secretary of State?

A We have gone to Mexico, Ethiopia, United Arab Emirates, Tajikistan. I may be forgetting some.

Q Okay. How did you learn about the assignment in Libya?

A I believe that there was an announcement requesting volunteers.

Q And you responded to that?

A Correct.

Q Okay. And were you at the [REDACTED] field office at the time?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And how long, if you recall, was this temporary assignment in Libya to be?

A I believe it was announced as a 60-day temporary assignment.

Q And would that have been in or around the spring or summer of 2012?

A Are you asking when I received the announcement --

Q Yes.

A -- or when I read it?

Q Received or read. The first time that you learned about the opportunity to go to Libya.

A Right. I believe it would have been around the spring or beginning of summer of that year.

Q And so you volunteered?

A Yes.

Q And why did you volunteer?

A I volunteered because I wanted to have that experience. I wanted to serve in the capacity of an assistant regional security officer, ARSO. That's primarily it.

Q Okay. And had you had any specialized training prior to accepting this assignment? In particular, I'm looking at whether you had the high-threat tactical course.

A Yes. I had attended the high-threat tactical course. I believe it was in May of that year.

Q Okay. Were there any other courses or specialized training that you had prior to going to Libya?

A Yes. I also attended a high-risk firearms course. I also completed our basic special agents course, which is very comprehensive, in addition to numerous other kind of distance-learning courses as well offered through the State Department.

Q At the time you took the high-threat tactical course in about May of 2012, how long was that course?

A How long was the high-threat tactical course?

Q Yes. How many weeks of training was it?

A I don't remember exactly. I believe it was approximately 5 to 6 weeks long.

Q And the high-risk firearms training course that you took, how long was that?

A That was no more than a week.

Q Okay. And what were the type of things that were taught in that course?

A You're referring to the high-risk firearms course now?

Q Yes.

A It had to do with the use of firearms in unconventional positions. For example, if -- it was just a lot of training on marksmanship and the use of firearms, if you are, for example, disabled, firing from your off hand, things like that.

Q Okay. And then there was a third course, a special agents course, I believe.

Could you tell us what that is again, please.

A All right. The basic special agents course is the course that all prospective DSS agents have to graduate from, and it encompasses -- it is a fairly extensive course, and it encompasses security overseas and domestically, the basic protective -- the components of doing a protective detail as well as the use of firearms, special agents' legal authorities.

Q Okay. And in that training what did they teach you about doing protective details overseas? What is their template or -- I'm struggling for the word here. Is there a recommended number of agents, cars and something to do a move with an ambassador or principal officer?

A I believe that talking about, like, the specific methods and tactics used by a law enforcement agency could -- could potentially be classified.

I hesitate to talk about our capabilities and the methods that

we use in the interest of safeguarding our protective details in the field.

So, if we could, could we revisit that in a classified setting?

Q We can take that into consideration at this point.

Prior to accepting -- or considering the assignment in Libya, had you talked with anyone else who had done the TDY in Libya?

A Yes, I had.

Q Okay. And who did you confer with?

A I spoke with other colleagues who had recently been there. Again, I hesitate to, like, identify them by name, you know, particularly for their own privacy concerns. If you would like to know their specific names, perhaps we could discuss it in a classified setting.

Q Okay. And you have reason to believe that their names are classified?

A No. It's not that I believe that their names are classified. I just hesitate to identify them by name for the same reasons I wouldn't like my own name to be -- I safeguard my own privacy just for my own operational effectiveness.

Q Then, let's ask it this way: You did talk to other people who had been to Libya. Is that correct?

A Yes, I did.

Q Okay. Without naming them, what were some of the general issues that you discussed with them regarding their experience in Libya?

A Well, from their accounts and -- are you referring specifically to Benghazi or just the assignments in Libya, in general, including both Tripoli and Benghazi?

Q To the extent that you can distinguish between the two, just please do so.

Did you talk to people who were in Tripoli versus Benghazi?

A Okay. So, in general, based on their accounts, Libya was a very -- had a very fluid security situation.

Q Uh-huh.

A For that reason, it was a very unique post. Also, they informed me that I would be given a lot of responsibilities because of the -- because of that, because of the very kind of unique and fluid nature of our assignments over there.

Q Okay. When you were -- let me ask this: When were you first selected to go to Libya?

A I think I may have been -- I can't remember the date exactly, but it would have been in the summer of 2012.

Q And then when did you actually go to Libya?

A I believe I arrived in Libya August 11th or 12th.

Q And did you know -- had you preferenced either Tripoli or Benghazi before going?

A I preferenced Benghazi. But, originally, I was assigned to Tripoli, I believe. Then it came to be that there was an opening in Benghazi. And I re-voiced my desire to go to Benghazi over Tripoli, and I was granted that request.

Q Okay. So you went directly to Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Didn't transit through Tripoli?

A No.

Q Okay. And you arrived either August 11th or 12th in Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And who else from Diplomatic Security was in Benghazi when you arrived?

A We had -- I believe it would have been at least three other Diplomatic Security agents in Benghazi at the time.

Q So you made the fourth?

A Yes.

Q Okay. Did all three of those individuals remain for any period of time?

A Yes.

Q In other words, was one leaving as you arrived or did all three stay for a period of time?

A Yes. There was an overlap between our tours of service several weeks.

Q Okay. So there was a steady state of four agents in Benghazi for all of August of 2012?

A I'm not sure exactly when they left. But there was a period towards the end of August or the beginning of September where -- where some agents left, we had gained another, and then two left. So there

was a period of time where it was three, I believe, of us.

Q Okay. And who was the principal officer in Benghazi when you arrived, if there was one?

A If you can excuse me a second.

Ms. Jackson. We'll go off the record. If you want to step out, please do.

[Discussion off the record.]

Ms. Jackson. All right. Let's go back on the record.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Agent [REDACTED], I believe the last question to you was who was the principal officer in Benghazi when you arrived.

Ms. Safai. Agent [REDACTED], let me step in here.

We would again like to reiterate the request to move -- Mr. [REDACTED] would feel a lot more comfortable answering these questions in a classified setting.

We understand that certain names aren't classified, but clearly we've already engaged in some information that he would feel more comfortable disclosing in a classified setting.

Ms. Jackson. We're going to go off the record and take a recess.

[Recess.]

Ms. Jackson. Let's go back on the record for just a bit.

We have been joined by Congresswoman Susan Brooks from Indiana. And as we introduced before, Congressman Westmoreland is here from Georgia.

Since we're still in this unclassified setting, is there anything



that the two of you would like to say on the record or ask the witness or say to the witness before we break and move?

Mrs. Brooks. Hello. I'm Susan Brooks from the State of Indiana, Indiana's Fifth District.

And appreciate you coming today to talk. Look forward to hearing what you have to say. I am sorry I won't be able to participate in the entire interview, but certainly look forward to hearing your answers to the questions.

And I know you've been through a lot at Benghazi and beyond and appreciate your service. And thank you very much for being here.

Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you.

Mr. Westmoreland. I did have one question to ask on the firearms training.

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Mr. Westmoreland. When you took the course, what weapons did they train you on? I mean, was it just your regular sidearm or was it -- you know, you come out of the military; so, I'm sure you knew how to shoot a rifle. But are those the kind of weapons that you were trained in?

Mr. [REDACTED]. We receive extensive training in the full complement of firearms that are authorized to us through DS. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] There's also some familiarization training on other weapons that -- for example, your heavier crew-served weapons.

Mr. Westmoreland. Like a SAW?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes. As well as, I believe, like, AK-47s and things like that as well.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. Did -- when you were in Benghazi at the temporary mission facility or whatever they call it, were those weapons available to you, all the different types of weapons? Do you recall what kind of weapons that you actually had there?

Mr. [REDACTED]. The weapons that were available to us would have been our [REDACTED] sidearm as well as M4 carbines.

Mr. Westmoreland. Those were the two classes of weapons that you would say?

Mr. [REDACTED]. There also were shotguns, but we didn't regularly carry those.

Mr. Westmoreland. So there was -- you didn't have any ARs or anything -- automatic weaponry other than the M4?

Mr. [REDACTED]. No, sir.

Ms. Jackson. Anything else? Let's go off the record until we break and reconvene.

[Whereupon, at 10:58 a.m., the interview proceeded in classified session.]

Mr. Evers. I think that's correct.

Ms. Sawyer. Yes.

EXAMINATION

A Yes.

Q Formations, number of agents, just what your

1 training taught you regarding making movements of protecting  
2 an ambassador, political officer, or other VIP person, for  
3 lack of a better term.

4 A Right. So in general there is somewhat of a wide  
5 field that you can -- that we can utilize depending on the  
6 resources available and the anticipated threats, all the way  
7 from a single agent, the agent in charge, to a detail  
8 numbering in the -- numbering about up 70 to 80 agents even.  
9 And as I said, that really all depends on the anticipated  
10 threat and the resources that we have.

11 Q Now, you also said that you had the high-threat  
12 tactical course. Did that training talk about the number of  
13 vehicles, agents that would be expected or what you were  
14 trained to use in a high-threat environment?

15 A Yes.

16 Q Okay. And what was that?

17 A Again, the exact resources they had available in  
18 terms of vehicles and numbers of personnel depended on  
19 resources. As with most things in federal service, as you  
20 well know, we make do with what we have, we do the best with  
21 what we have. And so it's really hard, without given a  
22 specific situation, to talk about what it would be like. But  
23 as I said before, it could range from just a few agents, a  
24 few lightly armored vehicles, to a full complement of several  
25 agents with other security teams and a number of vehicles,

1 ambulances, the whole nine.

2 Q Was there a minimum number that was taught to you,  
3 not real world, but taught to you in your high-threat  
4 tactical course as what was optimum for a movement in a  
5 high-threat environment?

6 A I don't recall ever being trained on an absolute,  
7 like a hard and fast absolute minimum number of agents or  
8 resources.

9 Q Okay. Was there an optimal number?

10 A Again, I don't recall ever being trained on what  
11 would be optimal. Again, as the situation dictates, similar  
12 in the military, the situation dictates, the threat,  
13 available resources, time, all those things, really what  
14 drive the detail.

15 Q We also were talking before about the number of  
16 agents who were present in Benghazi when you arrived. And I  
17 believe that you said there were three other agents there  
18 when you arrived. Is that correct?

19 A Yes.

20 Q And you arrived on or about August 11th or 12th?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Okay. And who were those other agents that were  
23 present when you arrived?

24 A There was [REDACTED]. I believe his first name  
25 was [REDACTED]. And the acting RSO [REDACTED].

1 Q And did those three remain there the entire time  
2 you were in Benghazi?

3 A No.

4 Q Were they all replaced?

5 A Yes. Eventually myself and agent [REDACTED] replaced  
6 Agent [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], and acting RSO [REDACTED] was  
7 replaced by acting RSO [REDACTED].

8 Q Did you know any of the agents who were assigned to  
9 Tripoli when you arrived?

10 A I'm not sure if he had arrived there yet when I  
11 arrived in Benghazi, but I knew personally Agent [REDACTED].

12 Q Who was assigned in Tripoli during the time you  
13 were there?

14 A He was in Tripoli, yes.

15 Q Okay. Before going to Benghazi, had you on your  
16 own undertaken any review regarding the security system --  
17 security situation there or had you been provided any  
18 information regarding the security situation in Benghazi?

19 A Yes. I took it upon myself to review what open  
20 sources of information were available. We're talking about,  
21 like, the news media, things that you can -- the public can  
22 generally find out about, recent events in the area. In  
23 addition, I went and met with the international programs desk  
24 officer and we spoke about specifically the mission in  
25 Benghazi.

1 Q And who was that individual?

2 A Agent [REDACTED]. And he provided me with also, I  
3 guess what would you call that, like an incident kind of  
4 sheet. It listed several incidents that happened in the  
5 recent past.

6 Q Do you recall approximately how many incidents were  
7 on that compilation?

8 A I don't recall.

9 Q Was it multiple pages?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Was it a short blurb or a long blurb regarding each  
12 incident?

13 A I really, sitting here today, I don't remember  
14 exactly how long each -- it would have been a few paragraphs  
15 perhaps for each incident.

16 Q And do you know who had compiled that series of  
17 incidents that had occurred?

18 A No, I don't.

19 Q Were these incidents solely in Benghazi or were  
20 they in Libya at large?

21 A I don't remember if it was only Benghazi. I  
22 remember obviously I was concerned mainly with the events  
23 going on in Benghazi, but I can't say for certain whether or  
24 not it also included the rest of the country.

25 Q What do you recall as being your highest concern as

you reviewed that document?

A My biggest concern would probably have been -- there was an attack on the special mission in which there was kind of this homemade explosive device that was detonated against the wall of the mission. That probably was the most alarming to me.

Q And had that happened in the summer of 2012?

A I believe so. I believe it was in July.

Q And do you recall approximately the size or the extent of the damage caused by that device.

A If I remember correctly, it blew a fair sized hole. I wouldn't venture to guess the exact dimensions, but it was a hole that was completely through the wall. And then there was as a result, there was a lot of shrapnel from, like, the fragments in the wall entering into the compound. I don't believe that anyone was injured, though.

Q Were there any other incidents that you specifically recall being recounted in that document?

A I believe that there had also been a number of shootings, and these were directed against other governments, and attacks against other governments. If memory serves, I believe that the British had been attacked. And I believe that also several Libyan officials had been attacked.

Q Do you recall whether there were attacks against any other Western countries or allies of the United States



1 other than the one you recall about the attack against the  
2 British?

3 A I don't remember.

4 Q Okay. Once you arrived in Benghazi did your  
5 assessment of the security situation change in any way?

6 A No. I think that I continued to believe that the  
7 security situation in Benghazi was extremely volatile and  
8 that there were real dangers present that we had to be aware  
9 of.

10 Q When you arrived in Benghazi, who was the political  
11 officer, if there was one?

12 A I suppose the political officer, also I guess we'd  
13 called him the principal officer.

14 Q I'm sorry. I think that is the correct term,  
15 principal officer.

16 A Right.

17 Q Yes.

18 A His name was [REDACTED] when I arrived.

19 Q All right. And how long did he remain the  
20 principal officer during your time there?

21 A He remained until the end of August, I believe.

22 Q And was he then replaced?

23 A Yes. There was a brief period where there wasn't a  
24 political officer, but he was eventually --

25 Q See, I made you do it, you said political officer

1       instead of principal.

2           A     I'm sorry.

3           Q     It's a problem that I've had throughout.

4           A     The acronyms are the same, PO.

5           Q     Yes. Principal officer?

6           A     Right, principal officer. There was a brief period  
7       where there was no principal officer on the mission, but  
8       eventually he was replaced by [REDACTED], who I believe  
9       was the DCM in Tripoli.

10          Q     And that would be deputy chief of mission?

11          A     Yes.

12          Q     Okay. And how long was Mr. [REDACTED] there, if you  
13       recall?

14          A     I believe he was there at least 2 weeks. I'm not  
15       certain exactly how long, but he was there for at least 2  
16       weeks.

17          Q     Okay. Taking a step back, can you describe for us  
18       the diplomatic facility in Benghazi? Physically how many  
19       acres do you estimate it was? How many buildings? What was  
20       its physical layout?

21          A     Okay. Well the special mission in Benghazi was  
22       located outside Fourth Ring Road in the city of Benghazi, so  
23       closer toward the outskirts of the city. It was comprised of  
24       about four principal buildings over -- encircled by a stone  
25       wall, which we had added concertina wire to further reinforce

1 the physical security of the compound wall. It was a fairly  
2 large compound given the numbers of American personnel.  
3 There was a number of -- there was a lot of greenery on it.  
4 I'm not sure what else. If you could be more specific.

5 Q It was enclosed by some sort of wall or fence  
6 because you mentioned the concertina wire?

7 A Right. It was enclosed by a wall. I'm not sure  
8 exactly how tall, but at the very -- at the top of this wall  
9 we had a row of concertina wire.

10 Q Was the wall taller than you?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Okay. And how tall are you?

13 A I'm [REDACTED]

14 Q Okay. So it was at least 7 foot or so?

15 A I would say so.

16 Q All right. Perhaps even higher?

17 A Yes.

18 Q You couldn't see over it?

19 A No. Standing on the ground I couldn't see over the  
20 wall.

21 Q And you said there were four buildings, four  
22 principal buildings on the compound. What were those  
23 buildings used for? And if they had names or numbers or  
24 letters associated with them, if you could use whatever you  
25 called them.

1           A     Okay. There was first the -- closest to the main  
2     gate there was the -- what we would call the cabana, which  
3     was where we housed our QRF unit.

4           Q     Was that quick --

5           A     Quick Reaction Force, yes. Then there was Villa C,  
6     which served as the meeting area and principal sleeping  
7     quarters of the principal officer, acting RSO, and I think  
8     one other assistant RSO, as well as our management officer.

9           Then, moving to the other side of the compound, there  
10    was the Tactical Operations Center building/office space.

11          Q     That's office space for the DS agents or for  
12    others?

13          A     Right. There was the tactical operations center,  
14    as well as the management officer's office, and an office for  
15    locally engaged staff.

16          Q     Okay.

17          A     And then finally there was the cantina, which had  
18    more sleeping quarters and a cooking and eating area.

19          Q     And was anybody assigned to those sleeping quarters  
20    in that building?

21          A     In the cantina?

22          Q     Yes.

23          A     Yes. Agents [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] were assigned to  
24    those sleeping quarters.

25          Q     Was that also known as Villa B?

1           A     I can't remember. I call it the cantina.

2           Q     Cantina. Okay. And was that, the Tactical.

3           Operations Center and the cantina, were they on essentially a  
4           separate piece of property than the QRF house and where you  
5           resided?

6           A     Yes. They were on the -- I guess it would be the  
7           eastern half of the compound.

8           Q     Was there a wall down the middle of the compound?

9           A     Yes. There was a double wall with an access way  
10          connecting the two sides.

11          Q     So there was a wall essentially separating the two,  
12          but it had been opened to allow access --

13          A     To allow vehicle traffic.

14          Q     So it was wide enough for at least one vehicle to  
15          go through?

16          A     Yes.

17          Q     Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi, did you  
18          receive information regarding the security situation there  
19          and in the area surrounding Benghazi?

20          A     Yes. The incumbent agents caught me up to speed on  
21          what they perceived as the main threats in the area, as well  
22          as some of the recent events, some of which I had already  
23          read about in my preparation.

24          Q     And what did they convey to you was the main or  
25          their main concerns and threats?

1           A    They reinforced my own existing belief that it was  
2   an extremely dangerous and fluid time in Benghazi and we had  
3   to be vigilant.

4           Q    And where were the threats coming from, were they  
5   Qadhafi loyalist, were they foreign entities from other  
6   countries? Can you to the best of your ability give us a  
7   sense of what was the source of the threats or sources of the  
8   threats?

9           A    This was my own understanding.

10          Q    Uh-huh.

11          A    In my own understanding, based on how I -- viewing  
12   the trends and the different incidents that had occurred in  
13   the past, I perceived the main threats to be numerous. There  
14   was, as you mentioned, Qadhafi loyalists who were attacking  
15   mainly Libyan officials that had come to power in the wake of  
16   Qadhafi's ouster, as well as people who had opposed Qadhafi  
17   who were taking revenge against officials in the ex-Qadhafi  
18   or in the former Qadhafi regime, as well as other groups,  
19   armed groups, that were perhaps ambivalent or even hostile to  
20   American interests. But it was -- I couldn't -- yeah, I  
21   would say that's it.

22          Q    Okay. While you were in Benghazi did you get any  
23   official reporting regarding the security situation from a  
24   State Department cable, from the military, from other  
25   government agencies?

1           A    I signed up for a daily threat brief. This would  
2   have been a commercial source.

3           Q    So it was open source?

4           A    I'm not sure if it was open source, but the exiting  
5   ARSO [REDACTED] signed me up for this email service that he  
6   had been using where he received daily briefings of incidents  
7   in and around the city. So there was that.

8           In addition --

9           Q    Let me ask you this. Did you have to go onto a  
10   classified system to access that or could you get it through  
11   an internet?

12          A    I viewed those emails on my OpenNet email.

13          Q    Okay. All right. Sorry, I interrupted your  
14   answer. So did you have anything more to say regarding this  
15   commercial service that you had?

16          A    No. I was going to add to the other sources.

17          Q    Okay. And your other sources of intelligence that  
18   you received?

19          A    We would also meet with the local guard force  
20   manager, who would sometimes provide us with his sense of  
21   what was going on in the city. In addition the security  
22   coordinator for the United Nations would visit the mission  
23   and we would talk about the security situation. He would  
24   relay to us information that he had that perhaps we didn't.

25          And of course we talked [REDACTED]

1

2 Q When you said that you would talk with the local  
3 guard force, do you mean a group separate from the QRF?

4 A Yes. The project manager for our contracted local  
5 guard force.

6 Q Was that a group called the Blue Mountain Group?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Okay. What does your local guard force do? Or  
9 what did they do in Benghazi?

10 A The primary purpose of a local guard force is to  
11 man the perimeter and the gates in order to delay and deter  
12 potential security risks and to afford us additional  
13 notice -- I don't know exactly how to articulate it -- to  
14 afford us advanced warning if there were to be a security  
15 risk. In addition, they were in charge of access control, so  
16 screening people as they were coming in the compound,  
17 screening vehicles as they were coming in the compound.

18 Q So they were sort of your notification group, first  
19 perimeter of security? I think I may be misdescribing this  
20 for you.

21 A Right. Them, and along with our liaison with the  
22 local government and local police force had formed kind of  
23 our outermost ring of security on the compound.

24 Q And did you have support from the local police  
25 department when you were in Benghazi?



1           A     Yes.

2           Q     Okay. Can you describe that support that you had?

3           A     We liaised with the local police force for them  
4     to provide a police presence outside of the compound. And  
5     they did provide units, they provided two officers at one  
6     time with a police vehicle, but sometimes, especially if  
7     their police force was not getting paid -- they weren't the  
8     most reliable presence outside of our cave. But we  
9     consistently tried to liaison with the local government to  
10    have that presence outside of our compound.

11          Q     Can you give us estimation about how often they  
12    would show up in the time that you were there? Was it 5 out  
13    of 7 days? Was it half the time? A quarter of the time? Do  
14    you have any sense or estimate of how often they would show  
15    up?

16          A     I really can't put a number on it. There were long  
17    stretches of time where they were very reliable, when they  
18    were there 24 hours a day. But then there were other times  
19    when they couldn't be found. Can't really say exactly how  
20    often they were or were not there.

21          Q     Going back to the local guard force, was there any  
22    issue with their being there as required, showing up for  
23    shifts, being there, having a sufficient number for the  
24    shifts? Was there any issues with the local guard force?

25          A     To my knowledge, we didn't have big issues with

1 guards not reporting to shift. We had some minor  
2 administrative issues where perhaps they wouldn't be in  
3 correct uniform. But in general they were very willing, they  
4 were very motivated and willing to do the job that we had  
5 tasked them with.

6 Q And let's move to the QRF. Tell us about the QRF.  
7 Did they come from the Libyan Government? Who were they and  
8 what were their roles and responsibilities?

9 A The QRF were members of a local militia called the  
10 17th February Martyrs Brigade. They were a notable militia  
11 in the area. They were one of the more powerful ones in the  
12 area. And furthermore they had shown that they would be  
13 willing to cooperate with the United States. And so they  
14 provided a number of QRF members to live on compound, to  
15 supplement our reaction plans in the event of an attack. In  
16 addition, they would go out with us off compound and help us  
17 liaison with the locals as we moved around the city.

18 Q And were they armed in any way?

19 A Yes, they brought their own arms from the militia.  
20 They were armed, yes.

21 Q And what kind of weaponry would they have?

22 A Our QRF, each member had an assault rifle, and in  
23 their cabana they also had a crew-served machine gun.

24 Q That was something that they brought --

25 A Right.

1 Q -- and was Libyan provided?

2 A Right. I don't know where they got those weapons,  
3 but I imagine that they were provided by the 17th February  
4 Martyrs Brigade.

5 Q So was each member of your QRF then armed with an  
6 assault rifle?

7 A Yes.

8 Q So each one had an assault rifle?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And then they had a machine gun. Was it in the  
11 cabana, outside the cabana, on the cabana?

12 A It was inside.

13 Q Inside. Did they train on it?

14 A On their individual weapon?

15 Q Yes.

16 A Yes, they did.

17 Q Okay. Did they train on the machine gun?

18 A I don't know if they ever trained on the machine  
19 gun. I certainly wasn't a part of any training with the  
20 machine gun.

21 Q Okay. Did you or the other agents conduct any  
22 training with either the local guard force or the QRF or  
23 both?

24 A Yes, we conducted extensive training and drills in  
25 order to -- well, taking them one at a time. With the local

1 guard force we conducted a lot of training and drills for how  
2 to react to certain situations, whether it be an attack, a  
3 bomb threat, how to react if you discovered a weapon on  
4 somebody trying to enter the compound, et cetera. We drilled  
5 how to react to different alarms, where to go, and the  
6 different procedures to take with the QRF. We drilled with  
7 them in order to incorporate them into our plans in the event  
8 of an attack.

9 Q And specifically what was the goal? What were they  
10 to do?

11 A Well, in the event of an attack on the compound,  
12 they were drilled to move to various fighting positions. And  
13 depending on where the attack was coming from, it would  
14 determine the fighting position that they would take and to  
15 engage with the attackers. In addition, part of our plan was  
16 for them to reach out with their colleagues in the 17th  
17 Martyrs Brigade in order to call for support in the event of  
18 a major attack.

19 Q And how many QRF members would you have on compound  
20 at any time?

21 A We had a total of three members. We were trying to  
22 secure a fourth.

23 Q And so you had three and hopefully four on the  
24 compound. Was that 24/7?

25 A Yes.

1 Q And you had another group that was outside the  
2 compound or elsewhere that you hoped would be back up and in  
3 supplement to those members?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Okay. Do you know approximately how many were  
6 supposed to be available as a backup?

7 A From the main militia?

8 Q Yes.

9 A I'm not sure exactly how many members they had set  
10 aside to respond.

11 Q Had you done any drills or training with the larger  
12 group to essentially time how long it would take for them to  
13 respond or not?

14 A No, we hadn't.

15 Q Okay. In the event of an attack, what was the role  
16 of the local guard force, what were they instructed to do?

17 A Their primary task in the event of attack was to  
18 sound the IDNS alarm. IDNS stands for Imminent Danger  
19 Notification System.

20 Q Is it sometimes commonly referred to as the  
21 duck-and-cover alarm?

22 A Yes.

23 Q What type of alarm is that?

24 A It's an alarm which is broadcast over the compound  
25 loud speakers. And as the name suggests, it announces -- it

1 tells you to duck and cover, has a series of tones, very  
2 loud, has a series of tones, and as a unit, you know, all  
3 members in the State Department that get assigned overseas  
4 are drill respond to that and to comply with the direction of  
5 the alarm.

6 Q And, again, I think I asked this before, but just  
7 in case I didn't, were you generally satisfied with the  
8 quality of the skills of the personnel that you had both in  
9 the local guard force and in the QRF when you were in  
10 Benghazi?

11 A I wouldn't say that I was totally satisfied. I've  
12 very high standards and of course there is always room for  
13 improvement.

14 Q Well, let's take the local guard force. Were there  
15 areas of deficiency that you saw based on your own standards?

16 A Offhand, I would -- one issue that I had to correct  
17 some of our local guard force members on was access control  
18 procedures. And so sometimes when there would be a person  
19 outside the gate they would open the door to the gate to go  
20 out and meet that person, when in fact there should be a  
21 person staying outside the gate so that you never have to  
22 open the door. So that is one area that I corrected them on.

23 Q Okay. And did you share that concern with your  
24 fellow agents?

25 A Yes. It was incorporated into our training, and we

1 also counseled the local guard force commander about that  
2 deficiency.

3 Q So that he could be vigilant as to that?

4 A Right.

5 Q Okay. What about the QRF, any similar type  
6 concerns with their skills?

7 A Yes, I think -- well, they weren't a professional  
8 military organization, so they were lacking in that regard in  
9 terms of their tactics, with the quality of their tactics and  
10 their equipment. In my time with them we tried to, besides  
11 integrating them into our drills and making sure they knew  
12 what their different roles and responsibility were, I tried  
13 to advise them on safe ways to handle weapons, in addition to  
14 proper maintenance of their weapons and equipment.

15 Q So they weren't very good at that?

16 A They weren't as good as I would like.

17 Q Did that include the fully automatic weapon that  
18 they had?

19 A Well, all of their weapons I believed were fully  
20 automatic, their assault rifles, yes.

21 Q Okay. Congressman Westmoreland earlier asked you  
22 about your specific firearms training, the extended firearms  
23 training that you had, [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED] Is that correct?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay. Are those the weapons that you had available  
2 to you in Benghazi?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Okay. Did you have any other weapons available to  
5 you that were provided by the State Department?

6 A No.

7 Q Well, actually I do believe you mentioned a shotgun  
8 too?

9 A Right, we received training on the shotgun. I  
10 didn't have any weapons that I wasn't trained on. I think  
11 that's what I was trying to answer.

12 Q Okay. Did you have any other type of specialized  
13 weapons or equipment either that you brought with you to  
14 Benghazi or was available to you once you arrived?

15 A Can you be more specific?

16 Q And you will have to excuse me because I don't  
17 know. I mean, are there different layers of, like,  
18 bulletproof vests? Are there full protective equipment  
19 versus partial. I'm a novice here on this, but that's where  
20 I'm trying to go with this question.

21 A Okay. So, yes, we were provided with body armor to

22 [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED] as well as [REDACTED] helmets. In addition, we had  
24 restraints like handcuffs and batons. We had smoke grenades.  
25 I can't remember. We may have had other equipment that I'm



1       omitting.

2           Q     Okay. Okay. Do you know what a tripwire is?

3           A     Yes.

4           Q     Okay. And what is a tripwire?

5           A     In what context? Like, in the military?

6           Q     How about at a diplomatic post for the State  
7       Department, what is a tripwire?

8           A     Okay. So commonly a tripwire would be referring to  
9       an event or incident that would set off a corresponding  
10      action by the mission. For example, a tripwire could be an  
11      all-out assault on the compound. If that were to occur, that  
12      would set off a corresponding action, which would be the  
13      evacuation of the compound or something like that.

14          Q     So tripwires can be at varying levels?

15          A     Yes, there can be several tripwires in a post  
16      security plan or an emergency action plan.

17          Q     Did Benghazi have tripwires?

18          A     They did, yes.

19          Q     Okay. Do you recall what they were?

20          A     I don't recall them specifically.

21          Q     Do you recall what any of them were?

22          A     I believe that one of the tripwires would have been  
23      an attack on the post, but I can't -- I never viewed the  
24      cable specific -- explicitly outlining what the tripwires  
25      were.

1 Q Okay. While you were in Benghazi did you ever hold  
2 an emergency Economy Action Committee meeting or its  
3 equivalent in Benghazi?

4 A Yes.

5 Q And explain to us what would happen during those  
6 meetings?

7 A During those meetings we would talk about the  
8 situation in the post. We would talk about the security from  
9 my side, we would talk about the security situation. We  
10 would also attempt to -- we would attempt to outline certain  
11 things that we needed as a post in terms of additional  
12 resources.

13 Q And who would be attending these meetings?

14 A It would be the RSO, I attended the meeting, as  
15 well as the assistant RSO, and the principal officer  
16 attended.

17 Q Would your IMO attend?

18 A I can't remember if Management Officer [REDACTED]  
19 attended.

20 Q And how many EACs did you have while you were in  
21 Benghazi?

22 A I participated in one.

23 Q Okay. And when was that held? Approximately when  
24 was it held, like, right after you got there, right before  
25 the attack, somewhere in the middle?

1           A     It was held certainly in August, perhaps. I don't  
2     remember exactly the date, unfortunately.

3           Q     And was it called in response to an event?

4           A     I don't remember.

5           Q     Okay. And what was the result of that EAC? Was  
6     there a recommended course of action that was to be  
7     undertaken?

8           A     I don't know what the result, the product of the  
9     EAC was. For my part, I contributed my thoughts on the  
10    things that I felt we needed from a security standpoint.

11          Q     And what were they?

12          A     I made recommendations regarding upgrade to our  
13    physical security infrastructure.

14          Q     And what specifically did you recommend?

15          A     I believe that I recommended that we have our -- we  
16    upgrade our closed-circuit television system. In addition, I  
17    brought up the defensibility of the compound and suggested  
18    that we revisit whether or not we should be at the compound  
19    or move to another site.

20          Q     Okay. And why did that concern you?

21          A     I felt that the compound itself was very difficult  
22    to defend given the resources that we had.

23          Q     Due to its size?

24          A     Due to its size and also due to the lack of  
25    setback. In other words, its close proximity to the road and

1 traffic. Also the lack of a hardened safe haven, as well as  
2 really hard perimeter security.

3 Q Were you also concerned about the number of  
4 security personnel you had on compound that could provide  
5 security support to it?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And was it your recommendation that you move from  
8 the compound?

9 A I don't believe I made a formal recommendation that  
10 we move from the compound, but I did voice a concern that I  
11 believe was commonly held that the compound itself was not an  
12 ideal location.

13 Q And when you say you expressed your belief, to whom  
14 did you express your belief, in your opinion?

15 A The other members of the RSO staff.

16 Q Okay. Did you discuss it with the principal  
17 officer?

18 A I can't remember.

19 Q Did you ever express it or know that that opinion  
20 had been expressed to the RSO in Tripoli?

21 A I don't know that. No, I never saw any official  
22 memorandum or cable.

23 Q And you yourself did not?

24 A Yeah, I did not reach out to the RSO of Tripoli.

25 Q Okay. Can you explain to us or outline to us how

1       Benghazi interacted with Tripoli, if it did?

2           A     We would interact with Tripoli via email or cable.

3           Q     Was Tripoli considered your supervisory post or was  
4       Benghazi concerned its own separate entity?

5           A     Tripoli was considered our supervisory post.

6           Q     Okay. And who was the RSO in Tripoli?

7           A     If I'm not mistaken, the RSO was [REDACTED]. Yeah,

8       [REDACTED]

9           Q     Do you know if he was replaced by a [REDACTED]c?

10          A     I believe he was.

11          Q     Okay. But when you arrived it was [REDACTED]?

12          A     I believe so.

13          Q     Did [REDACTED] ever visit Benghazi while you  
14       were there?

15          A     No.

16          Q     Did [REDACTED]?

17          A     No.

18          Q     I believe you said [REDACTED] was your acting  
19       RSO in Benghazi --

20          A     Yes.

21          Q     -- at the end. Is that correct?

22          A     Yes.

23          Q     Had he come from Tripoli?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     And do you know why he came from Tripoli?

1           A    I think that they were trying to staff the acting  
2    RSO in Benghazi from a pool of volunteers, much in the same  
3    way that I had volunteered to become the ARSO, but I believe  
4    that there was a shortfall in personnel and so they had to  
5    cover that gap by sending him from Tripoli to Benghazi.

6           Q    Do you know the extent of the resources that there  
7    were in Tripoli at the time?

8           A    I don't.

9           Q    We talked a little bit about tripwires. Did  
10   Benghazi have an evacuation plan?

11          A    Yes.

12          Q    Okay. And what was that?

13          A    In broad strokes the evacuation plan -- the primary  
14   evacuation plan was to secure all classified material,  
15   personnel, convoy to Benina International Airport in  
16   Benghazi, and take a commercial flight out of Benghazi to a  
17   location that would be determined.

18          The secondary would be the same except evacuate via a  
19   land route to the Egyptian border. And then the tertiary  
20   evacuation plan that we were working on would be to take a  
21   ship.

22          Q    Cargo ship?

23          A    Not necessarily a cargo ship, but a friendly flag  
24   carrier ship out of Benghazi. But I don't know exactly  
25   how -- that particular leg of the plan was not fleshed out.

1 We were still exploring that.

2 Q When you say you were still exploring that, it  
3 sounds to me like you were in the midst of revising the  
4 evacuation plan while you were there. Is that correct?  
5 Updating it? Supplementing it?

6 A I suppose you could say so. I mean, I wouldn't --  
7 I didn't embark upon that as official. It came to my  
8 attention that there was a resource where you could see  
9 different flag carriers coming in and out over the Internet.  
10 You could see what different flag carrier ships were coming  
11 out of Benghazi. And so it struck me as a worthwhile thing  
12 to pursue to tack that onto our evacuation plan.

13 Q And when you pursue it what do you do? I mean, do  
14 you physically go down to the harbor and talk to people or do  
15 you --

16 A I had not got gotten to that stage yet.

17 Q Okay. Now, I believe you stated that [REDACTED]  
18 was the principal officer when you arrived. Would you  
19 describe for us the nature and number and type of meetings  
20 that he would attend as the principal officer?

21 A I wasn't privy to the nature of his meetings with  
22 other officials in the Libyan Government. As to the number,  
23 during the time that we were both in Benghazi there weren't a  
24 great number of meetings, primarily because that was the  
25 month of Ramadan.

1 Q And then when he was replaced by [REDACTED]  
2 was Ramadan over?

3 A I believe that Eid had occurred, so I think that  
4 Ramadan was over. But unfortunately I'm ignorant of the  
5 Muslim faith and different traditions and holidays they have.

6 Q Okay. Did the number of meetings and movements  
7 pick up once Mr. [REDACTED] arrived?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. And were those meetings generally on the  
10 compound or off compound, or approximately how many times  
11 would you have to make movements off compound on any given  
12 day?

13 A Again, I can't answer in specifics about the number  
14 of off-compound moves, but there were meetings that we held  
15 on compound as well as off compound. I wouldn't say that  
16 there were several a day, one or two.

17 Q And when you would move off compound with Principal  
18 Officer [REDACTED], what would that movement look like, what  
19 was the security profile, if that is the correct term that  
20 you used?

21 A Depending on the location of the meeting, you would  
22 have one or two agents providing close security for DCM  
23 [REDACTED]. In addition, we had a QRF member as the driver to  
24 our vehicle, and we would be in an armored vehicle.

25 Q I see that I am approaching the end of my first



1 hour. I'm going to ask if Congressman Westmoreland has any  
2 questions that he would like to pose in the last 5 minutes or  
3 so.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. Five minutes?

5 Ms. Jackson. You can have a few more.

6 Mr. Westmoreland. When you mentioned, when you all went  
7 out, did you have anybody go to the location prior and kind  
8 of check it out before?

9 Mr. [REDACTED]. Right. One meeting springs to mind. DCM  
10 [REDACTED] was going to meet, I'm unsure of the gentleman's  
11 specific title, but he was in some way in charge of the water  
12 supply or water delivery to the city of Benghazi. In that  
13 instance I arrived beforehand to advance the area and make  
14 sure it was secure, and then Mr. [REDACTED] arrived afterwards  
15 with another agent.

16 Mr. Westmoreland. So somebody normally advanced the  
17 location typically?

18 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

19 Mr. Westmoreland. Typically. Just a couple of things  
20 and I will be going back a little bit. But what kind of  
21 contact did you have [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED]

23 Mr. [REDACTED] We had very fairly close ties. We could go  
24 over there at least once a week to --

25 Mr. Westmoreland. Have supper.

1 Mr. [REDACTED] Yeah, have supper, and then as well as to  
2 kind of flesh out, we tried to incorporate ourselves into  
3 their security plan in the event that we had to leave the  
4 compound [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] We tried  
5 to incorporate them into our security plan. So in some  
6 instances we had them over to the compound just so they knew  
7 the layout. In addition, we would go over there to review  
8 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] regarding security in Benghazi.

9 Mr. Westmoreland. On any of their visits over to the  
10 facility, did they ever express any concern about the  
11 security of the compound?

12 Mr. [REDACTED] No, they never explicitly expressed concern.

13 Mr. Westmoreland. You mentioned that there was a grove  
14 or orchard on there?

15 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

16 Mr. Westmoreland. And you had I guess two walls, a  
17 double wall separating the two?

18 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

19 Mr. Westmoreland. Was there ever any concern to anybody  
20 about there being that separation as far as any detection or  
21 infiltration of the compound?

22 Mr. [REDACTED] Regarding the wall specifically?

23 Mr. Westmoreland. Or the groves or the bushes or the --

24 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes. Within the RSO shop, one of the I  
25 guess deficiencies that we noted amongst ourselves was the

1 profusion of plants and trees and these vineyards and things  
2 like that which would be make it difficult, in the event that  
3 we had to clear the compound, would make it difficult to do  
4 so. We tried to remedy -- unfortunately, we couldn't cut  
5 everything down -- but we tried to remedy that by installing  
6 more lighting and making sure the power generation to that  
7 lighting was reliable.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. Did any of the DS, your agents or you  
9 or anyone else patrol the perimeters from the inside?

10 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, I did that.

11 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. And you did it every --

12 Mr. [REDACTED]. I would say I did it at least every day,  
13 sometimes twice a day.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. But not on a consistent, hourly kind  
15 of thing --

16 Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

17 Mr. Westmoreland. -- was anybody patrolling?

18 Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

19 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. But you would patrol and make  
20 sure there hadn't been any intrusions or penetrations or  
21 whatever?

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

23 Mr. Westmoreland. The QRF, quick response force, so you  
24 considered the three people the quick response force.

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

1           Mr. Westmoreland. And you said they were armed?

2           Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

3           Mr. Westmoreland. Were all the security cameras or  
4 closed-circuit TVs operational at the time that you were over  
5 there?

6           Mr. [REDACTED]. They were all operational. However, we did  
7 have visibility issues, especially at night with our CCTV  
8 system. For that reason one of the efforts that I tried to  
9 lead was having the ESO, Engineering Security Office, come  
10 out to install new CCTV cameras that we had received.  
11 Unfortunately, it wasn't to be. They were scheduled to  
12 arrive I believe the week after the attack.

13          Mr. Westmoreland. But the equipment did arrive?

14          Mr. [REDACTED]. We did have the equipment, we just didn't  
15 have a qualified technician to install it.

16          Mr. Westmoreland. Was there any extradition, you know,  
17 extraction plan? I know you mentioned an evacuation. Was  
18 there ever an extraction plan, in other words, for an  
19 immediate extraction, or you couldn't get out or whatever,  
20 was there ever an extraction plan? Because I know the  
21 military and I'm assuming security they'd like to have what I  
22 guess you could call an extraction plan.

23          Mr. [REDACTED]. Can you be more specific? You mean having  
24 somebody like helicopters coming in?

25          Mr. Westmoreland. Any type. I mean, if you were

1 completely surrounded or couldn't get out the gates or  
2 whatever, was there an extraction plan to get you all out,  
3 other than you evacuating yourself? Was there ever any type  
4 of extraction plan?

5 Mr. [REDACTED] The closest that I could think of a plan  
6 like that would be included in our regular attack/react plan,  
7 which would be to contact local host nation military and  
8 police, as well as the 17th February Martyrs Brigade, [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED]

10 Mr. Westmoreland. I'm not sure how I want to put this.  
11 When you say the local or the state protection force or  
12 whatever you call it, would that have been the Blue Mountain?

13 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, I'm referring to the local host nation  
14 military and police forces, the Libyan police and military.

15 Mr. Westmoreland. So that would have been the Benghazi  
16 police force that you were talking about?

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. The Blue Mountain was the  
19 force I guess that would have come. Were they going to  
20 furnish technicals or what you might call a pickup truck with  
21 a machine gun or some other kind of weapon on the back of it?

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. No. The local guard force and Blue Mountain  
23 Group is a contracted guard force, and at no time did  
24 we discuss plans on arming them or --

25 Mr. Westmoreland. They armed themselves?

1 Mr. [REDACTED] No, they didn't have arms at the time that I  
2 was there.

3 Mr. Westmoreland. The Blue Mountain didn't have arms?

4 Mr. [REDACTED] The Blue Mountain Group were not armed, they  
5 were not an armed guard force.

6 Mr. Westmoreland. Did the 17th Brigade have any trucks  
7 or equipment?

8 Mr. [REDACTED] As a whole, I personally never saw any  
9 trucks or technicals furnished by the 17th Martyrs Brigade,  
10 excepting on our convoy as we evacuated out of Benghazi  
11 towards the airport. I did see on our convoy out I did see  
12 some trucks that had machine guns on them. But during the  
13 attack I never saw any of those kind of trucks.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. Would it be Agent [REDACTED] the  
15 person that would have received any intelligence information  
16 that may have come from, say, the CIA or the NSA or any other  
17 Intelligence Community people? Would it have been [REDACTED]  
18 that would have been notified if there had been any  
19 intelligence?

20 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, Agent [REDACTED] could have been  
21 notified. Actually, the morning of the attack I was -- the  
22 morning of the attack I communicated with the Annex regarding  
23 any specific threats for that day, of which they had none.

24 Mr. Westmoreland. Was there any heightening of security  
25 or did they voice anything they may have received about

1 any --

2 Mr. [REDACTED] You're referring to the Annex?

3 Mr. Westmoreland. Yes.

4 Mr. [REDACTED] No. They did not relate any specific  
5 intelligence or any specific threat, no.

6 Mr. Westmoreland. Just a general let's be careful  
7 today?

8 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. We had already heightened our own  
9 security posture, just the sheer presence of the Ambassador  
10 on the compound, but we didn't receive any specific  
11 intelligence about it.

12 Mr. Westmoreland. I know I'm going over my 5 minutes,  
13 but when you say you heightened your security, what did you  
14 do to heighten your security?

15 Mr. [REDACTED] Well, in preparation we increased the tempo  
16 of our drills. In addition, we restocked our supplies on the  
17 fighting position of the roof of the villa that the  
18 Ambassador stayed in. In addition to that, we had an agent  
19 assigned in the villa. We have very clearly delineated goals  
20 and responsibilities that we went over and drilled again just  
21 to make sure everyone knew what to do in the event of an  
22 attack.

23 Mr. Westmoreland. Thanks for your service.

24 Ms. Jackson. I see that it is 12:35. We'll go off the  
25 record at the conclusion of at least an hour, maybe a little

1       more.

2               [Recess.]

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## EXAMINATION

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q We're back on the record. It's 1:30. And, again, my name is Heather Sawyer. I'm one of the counsel with the minority of the select committee. I'm joined today with two of my colleagues, Peter Kenny and Laura Rauch. We are hoping, the Ranking Member Congressman Cummings is hoping to come by. We're expecting he might be able to do so during the next hour or so. Hopefully he'll be able. He wanted to come in. I'll be able to talk to you a little bit. So I'm hoping that he'll be able to join us soon.

Thank you, once again, for taking time and appearing voluntarily with the committee. We know that you've spoken with the Accountability Review Board and the FBI and the DOJ about the investigations, and we appreciate your willingness to also come to the committee and share your firsthand knowledge with us. We know that it's probably not easy to talk about some of these events, but we do appreciate your willingness to do so.

I'm going to talk a little bit about some of the topics you touched on in the last hour and then explore some new ones, so we'll jump around a little bit. If any of my questions are unclear or confusing, please don't hesitate to let me know, and I'll do my best to clarify.

1           So, just starting with your volunteering to go to Libya,  
2       you said, when you talked about that, that you preferenced  
3       Benghazi. Why did you want to, in particular, go to  
4       Benghazi?

5           A     It was my understanding that I would have greater  
6       responsibilities in Benghazi, and that there would -- it was  
7       just a more interesting assignment, in my opinion, and that's  
8       why I preferenced it.

9           Q     And that notion that you would have individually  
10      greater responsibility, how did you feel about that? Was  
11      that something that was exciting to you? Did it make you  
12      anxious?

13          A     I was excited about it.

14          Q     And did you feel, based on what you knew about  
15      Benghazi, because you did talk a little in the last hour that  
16      you had done some background, did you feel prepared to handle  
17      what you felt would be your responsibilities?

18          A     Yes, I did. I did. I knew that it would be very  
19      challenging, and based on the things that I had heard, I knew  
20      that it was a very unique post. It was unlike some of our  
21      other missions overseas, but I felt confident in my abilities  
22      to adapt and meet them.

23          Q     And you had spent some time, you said, in the Army  
24      and then as a reservist. Could you talk to me a little bit  
25      about what your experience in those settings had been.

1           A     When I began my service in the Army, I was trained  
2     as a combat engineer. Essentially, a combat engineer is very  
3     much like an infantry soldier. You receive additional  
4     training as far as the placement and disarming of explosives,  
5     for example, for demolitions, or to place and disarm mines  
6     and things like that. [REDACTED]

7     [REDACTED], and it was with them that I  
8     served my tour of duty in Iraq.

9           Q     And how long were you in Iraq?

10          A     I was in Iraq from the end [REDACTED] until the  
11     beginning [REDACTED] I would say approximately 15 or  
12     16 months.

13          Q     And were you, during that time, involved in active  
14     gun battles, gunfire? Where you were under duress, I guess  
15     is not a very good way of describing it, but --

16          A     Yes. Like many of -- many other servicemembers  
17     throughout our war -- our Nation's wars, I was in close  
18     combat several times, to include gun battles, as you say, IED  
19     attacks, and sniper attacks, a variety of different kind of  
20     enemy actions.

21          Q     And you had talked a little bit about the fact that  
22     when you arrived in Benghazi, that the security environment  
23     was, as you had expected, in that there were real dangers, as  
24     I think you put it, real dangers that you needed to be aware  
25     of and be on alert for. And you did explore with my

1 colleague a little bit about what the potential source of  
2 some of those threats were. What was your understanding as  
3 to the type of threats, meaning gunfire? Was it explosives?  
4 What types of threats were you anticipating? And when you  
5 got there, was it as you expected?

6 A Well, based on my previous readings of incidents in  
7 the area, we had the one bomb attack against the compound in  
8 July of that year. In addition, I believe that it was the  
9 British who were attacked by an RPG, rocket-propelled  
10 grenade, and then, of course, there were numerous shootings.  
11 There were far more shootings than -- there were far more  
12 shootings than any other type of attack, if memory serves.

13 Q And these types of threats were the types of  
14 threats you had had some familiarity with based on your  
15 service in Iraq?

16 A Right, I had encountered all of those in Iraq as  
17 well.

18 Q So did you feel that you would be prepared to  
19 handle those types of threats once you had arrived in  
20 Benghazi as well?

21 A Yes, I would say so.

22 Q And then when you were there, you talked a little  
23 about the complement of the team that you had, and it sounds  
24 like it has changed a little bit over time, in the time you  
25 were there, as to who the RSO was. Who in Benghazi for the

1 DS team was responsible, was the lead of that team, kind of  
2 the top security person in Benghazi?

3 A The head of security, with regards to the  
4 U.S. Mission, would've been the Acting RSO at the time.

5 Q Okay. And so that started with [REDACTED]  
6 during your time?

7 A Right. When I arrived, the Acting RSO was [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED].

9 Q And then, at one point, it became [REDACTED]?

10 A Right, and then [REDACTED] replaced  
11 Agent [REDACTED].

12 Q And would [REDACTED] at first and then [REDACTED] be the  
13 person responsible for reporting to and interacting primarily  
14 with Tripoli?

15 A I'm unsure about exactly what they did do. I don't  
16 know exactly what they did do, but in a general sense, yes,  
17 the RSO is the one that's responsible for communications with  
18 higher.

19 Q And, though you didn't have that primary  
20 responsibility, did you have the ability to reach out to  
21 Tripoli if you needed to? I'm sure you must have had at  
22 least some communications on some of your responsibilities.

23 A Yes. On a few incidents, I communicated directly  
24 via email with human resources and management officers in  
25 Tripoli. In addition, I communicated with the engineering

1 security office based out of Cairo.

2 Q And do you remember, just in a general sense, what  
3 your conversations, just the general topics with HR and  
4 management in Tripoli were about?

5 A When I reached out to them, it was because I either  
6 needed funding for some project that I was undertaking or I  
7 needed their support in hiring.

8 Q So hiring for staff at the mission?

9 A Yes, we needed their support in hiring a driver.

10 Q And were they supportive? Were they responsive?  
11 Did they get you the funding?

12 A For the hiring issue, it took a little bit of time,  
13 but eventually we did start to make progress with heading on  
14 another locally engaged driver.

15 Q Had you been able to hire that person by the time  
16 of the attacks, by September 11, or was that still in  
17 process?

18 A I can't remember exactly at what point in the  
19 process we were looked at.

20 Q Okay. And then you mentioned the ES Office in  
21 Cairo that you interacted with him, and that was engineering  
22 services? Is that what it was?

23 A I believe ESO stands for Engineering Security  
24 Office.

25 Q And what kinds of projects were you working with

1       them on?

2           A     I was trying to get one of their technicians out to  
3       Benghazi in order to install our security cameras, our  
4       closed-circuit television system. In addition, I had a list  
5       of some other things that I wanted them to work on while they  
6       were out. For example, we needed to have our IDNS system  
7       updated, have more pendants issued for that system.

8           Q     And that -- you said you were working on it. And I  
9       think in the last hour you mentioned that it had been  
10      scheduled, but it was not scheduled until, I think, you said  
11      the week after. So I'm guessing that would've been about the  
12      week of the 16th of September?

13          A     Yeah, I forget exactly what date, but I know we had  
14      finally settled on a date for the ESO to come out and do the  
15      work that we required, but, unfortunately, the attacks  
16      happened.

17          Q     Do you remember -- from reviewing, we have many,  
18      many documents that have been delivered to the select  
19      committee as well as other congressional committees. And, in  
20      the course of reviewing those documents, it appeared -- and I  
21      have with me -- that you were also involved in a request.

22          Ms. Sawyer. And I'm going to mark for you a document  
23      and have you take a look at it, as Exhibit 1. Let me  
24      just borrow it back. I didn't want to give you a marked  
25      copy. Have you take a look at that.

1 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1  
2 was marked for identification.]

3 BY MS. SAWYER:

4 Q The top document of Exhibit 1 is an email sent from  
5 you on August 16 to a gentleman [REDACTED] in Tripoli, [REDACTED]  
6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED], and then cc'ing [REDACTED],  
7 who was the RSO in Benghazi at the time, as you indicated.  
8 Do you remember making this request?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And why had this request been made?

11 A Well, upon arriving at the special mission, one of  
12 my responsibilities in my portfolio was physical -- the  
13 physical security program at post. In addition, I was tasked  
14 to be the Tactical Operations Center officer. I then  
15 became -- it was apparent to me very quickly that the door  
16 that we had to secure the Tactical Operations Center was  
17 insufficient, in my opinion, from a security standpoint. And  
18 I felt that it would be a very relatively easy and  
19 inexpensive thing to upgrade, and so that's why I decided to  
20 tackle that as one of the first things, one of the first  
21 improvements to our security at the mission.

22 Q And did this project get completed? What was the  
23 status of this project?

24 A Eventually, we were able to hire a local contractor  
25 to fabricate a metal door with an upgraded throw bolt locking



1 system, and in addition to fabricating, to install it into  
2 the existing door frame, and that concluded that project.

3 Q And we will talk, in a little while, at some point,  
4 either in this hour or the next, about certainly the night of  
5 the attacks. But my recollection certainly is that there  
6 were efforts certainly to get into that TOC building.

7 A Yes.

8 Q So, you know, it does appear certainly that the  
9 work that you did here was very critical in terms of helping  
10 on the evening of the attack. Is that kind of your sense of  
11 it?

12 A In hindsight, I'm pleased that we were able to  
13 improve the security in the TOC. I don't know if that made a  
14 substantial difference to the way things turned out, but,  
15 yes, I am happy that we were able to make that improvement.

16 Q And it does sound like you certainly were working  
17 on additional improvements that, unfortunately, had not yet  
18 been scheduled to completion, but they were underway. Is  
19 that a fair representation?

20 A Yes.

21 Q So, while you were talking to my colleague during  
22 the last hour, you also had a discussion about tripwires at  
23 any post but also specifically in Benghazi.

24 Ms. Sawyer. So I was going to also just show you what  
25 I'm going to mark as deposition Exhibit 2 for identification

1 purposes.

2 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

3 was marked for identification.]

4 BY MS. SAWYER:

5 Q I'll just note for the record that at the top this  
6 document is titled, "Mission Libya Tripwires - Updated As of  
7 August 13, 2012." Before I ask you questions about it, do  
8 you recall seeing this document while you were stationed in  
9 Benghazi?

10 A Sitting here today, I don't remember reading this  
11 document.

12 Q Do you know who at the post would've been  
13 responsible for establishing those tripwires?

14 A I don't know specifically who established them. I  
15 would imagine that the RSO as well as the principal officer  
16 worked together to put this together.

17 Q And did you have -- do you recall having any  
18 involvement in putting that together or reviewing it at any  
19 point in time?

20 A I don't remember. I don't remember specifically  
21 working on these tripwires, no.

22 Q And do you know if anyone from Tripoli was involved  
23 in developing those tripwires?

24 A Unfortunately, I don't know.

25 Q And how about Washington? Do you know if anyone

1 from Washington, D.C., was involved in establishing those  
2 tripwires?

3 A No, I don't know.

4 Q So, in the earlier hour, there was also discussion  
5 of kind of the significance of the tripwire. Do you know who  
6 at post would have been responsible for monitoring those  
7 tripwires and determining if anything had occurred that came  
8 close to crossing a tripwire or breaching a tripwire?

9 A In the case of our mission and my time in the  
10 mission, I don't know who was specifically tasked with  
11 monitoring tripwires, but, again, what -- again, I would  
12 imagine that the RSO as well as the principal officer had  
13 that responsibility.

14 Q And do you recall, were you, yourself, involved in  
15 any conversations that you recall about whether tripwires had  
16 been, you know, crossed or if we were getting close to  
17 breaching tripwires in Benghazi during the time you were  
18 there?

19 A I don't remember any specific conversations about  
20 trip -- no, about crossing tripwires.

21 Q So one of the things that also came up during the  
22 last hour's conversation was the EAC -- and I don't want to  
23 misname it. Is that Emergency Action Committee?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay, the EAC -- that you did recall happenings at

1 some point during your time in Benghazi. Who -- remind me,  
2 if you would, who was in that meeting?

3 A It was myself, Acting RSO [REDACTED], [REDACTED]  
4 was also there. I can't remember if the other members of the  
5 RSO shop were there as well.

6 Q Do you remember if there's anyone who was not from  
7 the mission personnel present during that EAC meeting? Was  
8 there anyone [REDACTED] there?

9 A I can't remember.

10 Q And do you recall if anyone participated from  
11 Tripoli by telephone in that meeting?

12 A No, no, nobody teleconferenced in.

13 Q So no one teleconferenced in from anywhere?

14 A I don't believe so. I don't have any recollection  
15 of that.

16 Q And one of the things you mentioned about the  
17 meeting was that you had made a recommendation that there was  
18 a -- there would be a revisiting of whether or not the  
19 personnel in Benghazi continued to use the mission space.  
20 Who was involved in that conversation?

21 A All of us were in the EAC as well as in the RSO  
22 shop. There was an ongoing conversation about the  
23 requirements that we needed, the things that we would like to  
24 see happen in order to really vigorously improve our security  
25 situation in Benghazi, and naturally, the compound itself was

1 part of that discussion.

2 Q And do you recall, have -- did you have any  
3 conversations, besides with the folks at the mission in  
4 Benghazi, did you have any conversations with anyone [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED] about revisiting, staying at the mission facility?

6 A Yes. We worked [REDACTED] to strengthen  
7 [REDACTED] our security plan. One of the options that  
8 we discussed was [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED] or,  
10 as a third option, moving to an entirely different compound.

11 Q And what was the status of that conversation as  
12 best you remember it, you know, as of the night of the  
13 attacks?

14 A We had made some good strides to integrate each  
15 other into our security -- our respective security plans, and  
16 we had even together gone and visited another site to review  
17 it as a prospective new mission. But as far as I know, we  
18 hadn't made any definite plans to move ourselves out of the  
19 special mission.

20 Q Do you know if -- did you, yourself, ever convey  
21 the recommendation [REDACTED] to anyone other than  
22 the other folks at the mission in Benghazi?

23 A No.

24 Q Do you know if anyone -- if either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED] or anyone else -- made a formal recommendation to

1 anyone in Tripoli [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

2 A I don't know if they did.

3 Q So it's possible those conversations were going on,  
4 you just were not aware of them?

5 A It's possible.

6 Q And, during your time there, had there ever been an

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]

9 A Can you be more specific?

10 Q Sure. You know, in particular, there was, right  
11 around September 1 -- and you may remember this, I was going  
12 to talk to you about it in a few minutes -- September 1 is  
13 the anniversary in Libya of the Green Revolution, and again,  
14 from our review of the documents, there was some concern  
15 about the threat that that anniversary would pose, not  
16 specifically to Americans or American interests but just  
17 because there could be protests, there could be activity.

18 Do you recall any conversation [REDACTED] around  
19 the September 1 anniversary?

20 A I don't remember. Sitting here, I don't remember  
21 if we discussed that.

22 Q [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED]

24 A [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]  
2 Q And do you recall just staying there for a night or  
3 a series of nights?

4 A We did go over there frequently and spend long  
5 periods of time there and even participated in some of their  
6 emergency action drills, but I don't recall ever sleeping  
7 overnight [REDACTED]

8 Q Was that a possibility? Was that something that  
9 you could have done had the security assessment warranted  
10 that, like if people had felt that was necessary for security  
11 reasons? [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]  
13 A Well, I dislike to speculate about what could or  
14 couldn't have happened. I know that I don't remember ever  
15 doing so, but if you're asking me to just to generalize and  
16 think about what could have happened, I suppose that is  
17 possible.

18 Q Now, one of the other things that came up in the  
19 last hour when you were talking about the EAC is you  
20 indicated that you had never seen a cable come out of the  
21 EAC. Were you aware that a cable was being prepared as a  
22 result of the EAC that you did attend?

23 A I remember a conversation with [REDACTED] afterwards in  
24 which he talked about having a lot of work to do and one of  
25 those things being to draft a cable, but I would -- I never

1 reviewed or read the product of his work.

2 Q Do you know if anyone else at the mission was  
3 helping or involved with [REDACTED] in drafting a cable?

4 A I don't know.

5 Q In taking a step back, to the extent you can help  
6 us understand this, what would be the purpose of a cable? Is  
7 it a formal communication? What is the purpose of doing a  
8 cable as opposed to sending an email, for example?

9 A Well, in a general sense, the cables are used to  
10 widely distribute information to the appropriate parties and  
11 you can distinguish who and who has access to any particular  
12 cable or -- and one of the main purposes of using cables over  
13 working emails, for example, is the creation of an archived  
14 record of decisions or actions that have been undertaken.

15 Q And with regard to any cable that was done as a  
16 result of that EAC, though, you did not ever see either a  
17 draft -- did you ever see a draft of a cable?

18 A I can't remember reading a draft for the cable, no.

19 Q Did you ever see a final cable?

20 A No, I can't remember reading any cable regarding  
21 the product of the EAC.

22 Q In the conversations that you were involved in  
23 about potential [REDACTED] and revisiting and doing, you  
24 said you reviewed a prospective site, did anyone in those  
25 conversations ever object to the notion [REDACTED]?



1           A     I don't remember anyone ever explicitly objecting

2           [REDACTED].

3           Q     Was it more a matter of trying to work out  
4     logistics, a place that was both large enough to accommodate

5     [REDACTED] the personnel at the mission [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

6     [REDACTED] and as secure as possible?

7           A     Yes. As I understand it, the main obstacles to  
8     closing, from our side, I can't really speak to the  
9     administrative hurdles [REDACTED]

10    overcome, but in my experience, the main issues were this  
11    uncertainty regarding the permanence of our mission. I  
12    believe the mission was tentatively scheduled to close in  
13    December. And, therefore, the State Department was loathe to  
14    spend more money to do serious upgrades on the existing  
15    compound or spend more -- even more money building a new  
16    compound from scratch.

17           Q     And were you involved in any of those conversations  
18    about the future of the mission?

19           A     No. Unfortunately, my -- no. Unfortunately, I  
20    didn't have the level of responsibility that approached that.

21           Q     So that was not part of your either day-to-day or  
22    kind of overall overarching responsibilities?

23           A     No. I was mainly concerned with the physical  
24    security on the compound as it existed as well as day-to-day  
25    operations on the compounds.

1           Q     And touching on briefly just another topic, you did  
2     discuss that there was a process underway to update or  
3     revisit or at least work on the, I think, emergency  
4     evacuation plan for the mission. Who would, at the mission,  
5     have been responsible for that, for doing that update?

6           A     I think as an RSO shop as a whole, we all had input  
7     into revising and making sure our emergency action plans were  
8     up to date. I'm unsure who final responsibility rested with,  
9     but I know that we all provided input into updating the  
10    emergency action plan.

11          Q     And did you feel like in that process, did you have  
12    any concerns with the plan that you expressed?

13          A     No. I thought it was very well thought out given  
14    the resources that we had. I thought it was a very  
15    well-reasoned and a good plan.

16          Q     So I want to talk a little bit about the  
17    Ambassador's trip and the preplanning at first, at least, for  
18    that trip. When did you first find out that the Ambassador  
19    was planning to come to Benghazi?

20          A     I don't remember the specific date, but it was at  
21    least 2 weeks before he actually arrived.

22          Q     And did you have any sense of whose idea it was for  
23    him to come?

24          A     No, I don't know whose idea it was.

25          Q     And did you have a sense of the purpose, why he was

1 coming to Benghazi?

2 A No, I can't say that I knew the reasons why he was  
3 coming either.

4 Q And what was your role? Who first told you that he  
5 was coming? How did you learn of it?

6 A I was first informed that he was arriving by Acting  
7 RSO [REDACTED]

8 Q And did you -- what was your role? What were the  
9 discussions? What was your role in helping plan for that  
10 trip?

11 A My role would've been not outside of my existing  
12 portfolio. I had to kind of make sure -- I had to survey our  
13 existing physical security arrangements and make as many  
14 improvements as I could before he arrived. In addition, we  
15 increased the tempo of drills with the local guard force and  
16 with the QRF. And we also worked with our liaisons with the  
17 local police to try and assure that we would have an added  
18 presence during the period of time when the Ambassador would  
19 be in Benghazi.

20 Q And with regard to the physical -- let's just break  
21 this down a little bit. With the physical security  
22 modifications that you did, what steps did you take in  
23 particular for the Ambassador's trip?

24 A Well, this work was started by my predecessors and  
25 we continued the effort to strengthen our fighting positions.

1 We had these sandbags set up at certain strategic locations,  
2 primarily for the use of our QRF and that was integrated in  
3 with our attack/REACT plans. In addition, we worked very  
4 hard to strengthen the reliability of our electricity  
5 generation. We had another generator put in because we had  
6 experienced a lot of outages, which led to our lights going  
7 down on the compound, exterior lights.

8 In addition, I tried to make improvements to the safe  
9 haven, storing and caching supplies in strategic locations,  
10 both on the roof and in the safe haven. I worked on those  
11 particular things with Agent [REDACTED].

12 Q And I think you spoke some about the increased  
13 drills in the last hour --

14 A Uh-huh.

15 Q -- and also the conversations that were going on  
16 with the local police. With all these preparations, were  
17 there any security concerns that you had and raised that you  
18 felt were not being addressed for the Ambassador's trip  
19 specifically?

20 A I remember having conversations with other RSOs and  
21 with Acting RSO [REDACTED] regarding perhaps having the trip  
22 canceled or postponed. I'm not sure what the result of that  
23 was, but one of the -- I felt that we needed certainly more  
24 manpower in order to properly support his visit.

25 Q And with Ambassador Stevens, two DS agents came.

1 Do you know how the decision was made to send two?

2 A I don't.

3 Q And that brought the number at the mission up to  
4 five total?

5 A Yes.

6 Q And had you thought and requested or recommended  
7 more than five DS agents?

8 A I personally didn't make any specific  
9 recommendations on the number of agents, no.

10 Q Did you make any recommendations about other  
11 aspects? You didn't make recommendations about the number.  
12 Did you make personal recommendations about other aspects?

13 A No, I didn't.

14 Q And you said that you had discussed it, you  
15 believed, with the other RSOs. So, at the time, that  
16 would've been Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED]?

17 A Right. We discussed it amongst ourselves in  
18 addition before RSO -- or Acting RSO [REDACTED] left. We also  
19 talked about it with him as well.

20 Q And so was the planning for the Ambassador's trip  
21 already underway when Mr. [REDACTED] was still there?

22 A I can't remember exactly when we began to plan, in  
23 earnest. Although, if memory serves me, we did first learn  
24 about his -- the trip while [REDACTED] was there and so we  
25 would have started to look at the things that we would need.

1           Q    And do you know if, when you first learned about  
2   it, if that particular trip was scheduled for -- to occur  
3   from September 10 to the 14, or was it scheduled for a  
4   different possible date? Do you have any recollection of  
5   that?

6           A    No, I don't remember what the dates were.

7           Q    And do you know if -- you said that the  
8   conversation about potentially rescheduling or postponing,  
9   you said canceling or postponing the trip, you felt like  
10  there was some conversation of that. Was that ever conveyed  
11  to anyone in Tripoli? Did you ever convey that to anyone in  
12  Tripoli?

13          A    I didn't communicate with anyone in Tripoli about  
14  that. I don't know if the other RSOs did either.

15          Q    So the ultimate dates that the Ambassador was  
16  scheduled to be there did fall over -- starting on the 10th  
17  of September, then would fall -- I think it was scheduled to  
18  be there until the 14th. It was going to fall over the  
19  anniversary of the terrorist attacks in the United States.  
20  Was there any particular discussion of that fact as you were  
21  planning for the Ambassador's trip?

22          A    I don't think that we made an explicit -- I don't  
23  think we -- I never made an explicit note that the  
24  anniversary of the September 11 attacks would fall over --  
25  would fall during the visit. Of course, it was in the

1 background, but I don't think that it -- the fact that that  
2 was the anniversary of the attacks made any big impact into  
3 our planning.

4 Q So the concerns you had about and the discussions  
5 about potentially postponing or canceling were not related to  
6 the fact that it was going to fall over the anniversary of  
7 the 9/11 attacks?

8 A No. As I remember it, my biggest concern with the  
9 visit was simply that we didn't have sufficient personnel, in  
10 addition to some of the other issues we were having with  
11 equipment and security upgrades.

12 Q And, with regard to the insufficient personnel,  
13 specifically, what did you feel was lacking?

14 A I believed that we needed more numbers of agents or  
15 MSD or some combination thereof, simply because if the  
16 Ambassador were to have meetings out in town, we would have  
17 to -- we wouldn't have enough agents to properly secure the  
18 mission and to detail to his personal security detail  
19 simultaneously.

20 Q And this conversation, again, about the number of  
21 agents, you just don't recall that it -- you ever took it --  
22 you didn't ever take it beyond Benghazi, and you don't know  
23 whether it was taken besides you by Mr. [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]  
24 to Tripoli?

25 A I can't remember ever seeing a communique between

1 the RSO shop regarding that subject specifically. So I can't  
2 say with 100 percent certainty that we actually voiced those  
3 concerns.

4 Q And, in light of those concerns, did anyone  
5 proactively [REDACTED] during the  
6 time of the Ambassador's visit?

7 A I'm not aware of discussions [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED] because of the Ambassador's visit.

9 Q Now, my understanding -- and correct me if I'm  
10 wrong -- is that one of your responsibilities during the time  
11 you were in Benghazi was to interact and work with the QRF --

12 A Yes.

13 Q -- the February 17 security support. And was that  
14 with regard to the complement of security personnel who were  
15 living on the compound and were the internal?

16 A Yes. One of my responsibilities was to be a  
17 liaison with the February 17 Martyrs Brigade members that we  
18 had on compounds. And primarily I did that through their  
19 commander, who had a very good command of English. And,  
20 besides that, I would inform them of upcoming missions where  
21 we would require their support off compound as well as, as I  
22 mentioned before, the training and drills to integrate them  
23 into our security plans.

24 Q And were you responsible for conducting those  
25 drills? Did you conduct them jointly with the commander?



1 How did that work?

2 A Yes. I was responsible for conducting the drills,  
3 and he, the commander, participated in them. He had direct  
4 authority over the other militia members. But I made my  
5 concerns known to him, and I made known to him the things  
6 that I would like to see improved or done differently, and he  
7 usually was very good as implementing those changes.

8 Mr. Cummings. How do you pronounce your name?

9 Mr. Evers. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED].

10 Mr. Cummings. My name is Elijah Cummings, Congressman  
11 Cummings. I am the ranking member of the Benghazi Select  
12 Committee.

13 I first want to express my condolences, and I know you  
14 lost some comrades. And I want to thank you for your  
15 service.

16 One of the things that I had occasion to sit in on, back  
17 in October 2013, sit in an interview with your colleagues.  
18 And he had a concern because he was a primary witness in the  
19 investigation of the attacks, and he was worried that he and  
20 his family might be targeted. And all of us, one of the many  
21 I'm concerned about, those kind of issues, because the last  
22 thing we want to do is put you in a situation and your family  
23 where you're in jeopardy. You've been through a lot already.  
24 And no one should have to live like that.

25 So I just want to know, as both a private citizen and a

1 law enforcement officer, do you have any concerns over the  
2 disclosure of your identity in connection with the attacks,  
3 and are you concerned with the notoriety and the scrutiny of  
4 the disclosure, these disclosures might bring to you?

5 Mr. [REDACTED]. I am, sir. I think, as has been raised by  
6 others and raised here today, on the very best-case scenario,  
7 as we have seen, because my name is one of the few that's  
8 been leaked out to the press, in the best case, my family and  
9 myself have been contacted by the press and others, which is  
10 not desirable. It's not a huge inconvenience. But, in the  
11 worst case, I do sometimes worry about reprisals or  
12 retaliation from, you know, very -- as we have seen in the  
13 past -- an enemy in some terrorist organizations that's very  
14 capable of and very willing to do harm.

15 And so I do worry about that, and I've taken some  
16 measures on my own to secure my family and myself against  
17 that. But so, yes, I appreciate your concern.

18 Mr. Cummings. Do you think the government has done all  
19 that's reasonably possible to help allay some of your fears?

20 Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm very gratified by the support that I've  
21 received personally and my family has received by Diplomatic  
22 Security in the aftermath of these attacks, not only having  
23 to do with the security and peace of mind, that support of  
24 just on the basic administrative side that they've given us,  
25 [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]  
2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
3 It's unusual -- and I'd like to take this opportunity  
4 actually to recognize those men and women [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED] because they do an  
6 outstanding job. It's really strange to think of the  
7 Department of Defense or the Army being at the forefront of  
8 any kind of field. We usually think of the Army as kind of a  
9 stodgy, monolithic organization, but they are really on the  
10 cutting edge [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED] So --

12 Mr. Cummings. Go head, let you finish.

13 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, I'm -- thank you.

14 Mr. Cummings. Are there any specific questions that you  
15 have that you want to ask us?

16 Mr. [REDACTED]. I can't think of any, sir.

17 Mr. Cummings. Well, again, I want to thank you. In  
18 talking to some of the folks, they've also said that this has  
19 been rather traumatic to have to kind of relive this over and  
20 over again. But, again, thank you. If there's anything we  
21 can do to be supportive of you and your family, we will do  
22 that.

23 Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you.

24 Mr. Cummings. All right.

25 Ms. Sawyer. And just picking up on that a tiny bit and

1        then I'll return and wrap it up and we can take another break  
2        and switch back. You know, one of the things I think has  
3        been very important for the members that I represent to try  
4        to make sure we're doing, you know, this is the  
5        Accountability Review Board conducted its investigation,  
6        issued a report in December of 2012, provided that to  
7        Congress. This is now the eighth congressional  
8        investigation. So, certainly, from my members' perspective,  
9        they are very interested in hearing particularly from people  
10       who were so deeply involved, kind of what, if anything, it is  
11       you think we should be focusing on?

12       Mr. [REDACTED]. I wouldn't presume to educate the members of  
13       the committee on what they should or shouldn't be doing. I  
14       understand that there's valid concerns that exist still about  
15       the events in Benghazi, and I just hope that we all do our  
16       best and serve our country as diligently as we can.

17       Mr. Cummings. Let me just interject real quick. One of  
18       the things, I mean, we've met with all the family members  
19       before of the deceased Americans. And all of them said, we  
20       want you to get to the truth and try to come up with, as best  
21       you can, ways to prevent this from happening again. In light  
22       of that, I mean, with the question that you were just asked,  
23       are there things that you saw or observed that you said,  
24       Well, you know, we need to really look into this specific  
25       thing, in an effort to make sure that we do all that we can?

1 We know nothing is 100-percent proof to prevent these things  
2 from happening again.

3 Mr. [REDACTED]. I think that one of the big -- and I may be  
4 mistaken, but I believe it's one of the recommendations that  
5 the ARB came forward with -- one of the big lessons that came  
6 out of Benghazi, as I understand it, was that now we take a  
7 more deliberate look at weighing risks versus benefits. When  
8 we talk about what we're doing in a particular country or  
9 region of the world, we're a little bit more deliberate about  
10 saying, is the juice really worth the squeeze, so to speak?  
11 And that's going on in DS. I don't know if it's -- how high  
12 a level it's happening, but I've already seen that change  
13 coming within DS. So I think that that's a very important  
14 change.

15 Mr. Cummings. Thank you.

16 BY MS. SAWYER:

17 Q And then just to close the loop on the conversation  
18 we were having just a minute ago. So, in the runup to the  
19 Ambassador's visits and given the concerns that you all were  
20 talking about in Benghazi, were there particular steps that  
21 you all took, such as restricting off-compound moves, or, you  
22 know, to help mitigate some of those concerns?

23 A And if I understand you correctly, you're asking  
24 what kind of different -- what different procedures we put in  
25 place regarding the Ambassador's arrival to mitigate -- I'm

1       sorry. Could you repeat the question?

2           Q     Sure. It was a long one. And it's already been a  
3     long day, I'm sure.

4           A     I lost my way. I'm sorry.

5           Q     No, understood. No, thank you.

6           As you were doing the planning and the runup and given  
7     the concerns that you all talked about in Benghazi about  
8     having -- doing the best you could with the resources you had  
9     to make sure that he was safe and secure, were there  
10    particular things, such as limiting the meetings that were  
11    going to happen off compound versus on compound, that you  
12    were -- that you talked about and that you took to obviously  
13    make the environment as safe as possible?

14          A     Yes. One of the big compromises we were able to  
15    make was to schedule most of his official meetings to occur  
16    on compound, and in that way, we wouldn't have to split our  
17    resources. In other words, we wouldn't have to assign agents  
18    away from the compound and leave the compound with only a  
19    single person, for example. So --

20          Q     Okay. All right.

21          Ms. Sawyer. Well, why don't we go off the record.

22          [Recess.]

23

24

25

1  
2 Ms. Jackson. We will go back on the record at  
3 approximately 2:42.

4 BY MS. JACKSON:

5 Q Agent [REDACTED], I want to follow up on a couple of  
6 questions that were asked to you in the last hour, and then I  
7 went to move on to some security incidents that occurred  
8 while you were in Benghazi. But in the last hour we were  
9 talking about a series of physical security upgrades that you  
10 had recommended and that you were overseeing to strengthen  
11 the Special Mission Compound in Benghazi. Do you recall  
12 that?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Okay. Do you know how long the special mission had  
15 been in that location at the time you got to Benghazi?

16 A I don't know specifically how long we had been at  
17 that location. My understanding is that's the first site, I  
18 guess, that we opened up when, like, during the Arab spring  
19 and when the rebellion against Qadhafi was ongoing, and then  
20 immediately after we obtained that site in order to have our  
21 special mission.

22 Q So was it your sense that it had been there in that  
23 location for at least a year?

24 A Again, I don't know specifically how long, but it  
25 was my understanding that it had been that site, specific

1 site for the entire -- from the fall of Qadhafi onward.

2 Q Okay. So from whatever that date was forward.

3 A Right.

4 Q And yet when you arrived there were still physical  
5 security upgrades that needed to be implemented?

6 A Yes.

7 Q Were they, in your opinion, sort of the bare  
8 minimum upgrades that needed to be accomplished?

9 A Yes. I thought that there were still some pretty  
10 significant improvements that needed to be made.

11 Q Okay. And when you talked about reinforcing you  
12 said the top door and sand bags and things like that, was  
13 there anything else that comes to mind or that you recall?  
14 You also mentioned the closed-circuit TV cameras. Anything  
15 else that you recall requesting be implemented?

16 A I recall in addition to the closed-circuit  
17 television camera system that we wanted to be upgraded, we  
18 needed work to be done on our early warning system, our  
19 duck-and-cover alarm, in order to put a new panel in that  
20 would marry up with the pendants or remote controls that we  
21 had for them so that we could distribute those to the guards.

22 Q So how when you were there would the duck and cover  
23 be activated?

24 A You could either activate it at the panel in the  
25 TOC or we did have one pendant still operational, and one of



1 the guards at the main gate carried that at all times so they  
2 could operate it remotely.

3 Q And how many gates could be opened and closed  
4 surrounding the compound?

5 A We had three gates.

6 Q And did you have local guard force at all three  
7 gates?

8 A Yes.

9 Q But only at the main gate did anyone have what I  
10 would call the remote control for the duck and cover?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Okay. And did you make that request to have more  
13 of the what I will describe as -- what you described as the  
14 pendant, what I will describe as the remote controls?

15 A We actually had more. We had new pendants  
16 available to us. However, they weren't compatible with the  
17 existing panel in the TOC. So part of the laundry list of  
18 items that I wanted the SB0s for the ES0s to work on when  
19 they arrived was to be the installation of a new panel.

20 Q Had the request for the ES0s been made prior to  
21 your arrival in Benghazi?

22 A Yes, the communication with that office started  
23 with my predecessor, Agent [REDACTED]

24 Q So that would have been in the June-July timeframe?

25 A I don't remember exactly when he started

1 communicating with the ESO office, but it was before my  
2 arrival.

3 Q Okay. And do you know why there was a delay in  
4 getting someone into Benghazi to make this upgrade?

5 A I don't know why.

6 Q Okay. Agent [REDACTED], we have talked about the  
7 principal officer being there and an IMO being there. Was  
8 there other U.S. Government personnel on the compound other  
9 than the DS agents?

10 Ms. Safai. Can you specify what timeframe you're  
11 referring to?

12 Ms. Jackson. During the time he was there.

13 Mr. [REDACTED] So, no, during the time that I was there it  
14 was only the principal officer, management officer, and then  
15 the RSOs, the agents.

16 BY MS. JACKSON:

17 Q You mentioned earlier that there was locally  
18 employed staff?

19 A Yes.

20 Q And how many locally -- well, the local guard  
21 force, were they considered locally employed staff or were  
22 they in a different category?

23 A They were in a different category. We consider  
24 them a contract guard force. Of the locally employed staff,  
25 I'm not sure exactly the specific numbers, but we had a

1 gardener, cleaning staff, as well as I guess the function  
2 would be best described as like a secretary, in addition to  
3 drivers for our vehicles.

4 Q And were they all Libyan?

5 A No, I believe -- I'm not sure what the  
6 nationalities were of some of them, but I believe that some  
7 were of other nationality rather than Libyan.

8 Q Were any of them Americans?

9 A Of the locally engaged staff?

10 Q Yes.

11 A No, not to my knowledge.

12 Q Were you familiar with an individual whose name was  
13 [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And was he an employee of the Special Mission  
16 Compound?

17 A No, he wasn't.

18 Q He was not an employee?

19 A No.

20 Q Under what circumstances did you meet him then?

21 A [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED]

24 Q And how often did you see him?

25 A I don't think that I would -- I would not see him

1 on a regular basis. Again, I can't remember exactly how many  
2 times, perhaps a handful of occasions.

3 Q Would he generally meet with the principal officer?

4 A Yes, I would say so. I wasn't privy to, like, the  
5 purposes of his visit or what they talked about, but, yes, he  
6 came to be with the principal officers.

7 Q So let me ask it this way. When he did come to the  
8 compound, who did he meet with?

9 A He would meet with the principal officer.

10 Q Did you ever see him out at locations where you or  
11 others took the principal officer to meet with other Libyans,  
12 such as members of the government?

13 A The only instance I can recall seeing him outside  
14 the compound was when we made a visit to the site of the  
15 American Corner. We took Principal Officer [REDACTED] to the  
16 American Corner to talk about the opening ceremony that they  
17 were to have.

18 Q And he was present then?

19 A Yes, I believe he was there.

20 Q Do you know if he had any role in planning the  
21 Ambassador's visits?

22 A I don't know.

23 Q We talked in the last hour and in the hour before  
24 about the February 17th Martyrs Brigade that provided some of  
25 their members to be your quick response force, reaction force

1 on the compound. Right before the Ambassador's visit, was  
2 there any issue that arose regarding the ones that were  
3 assigned to the Special Mission Compound?

4 A Yes. I think it was the week before the Ambassador  
5 would have arrived or was to have arrived, the commander  
6 informed me that he had been informed by his superiors that  
7 they were no longer to be allowed to support us on  
8 off-compound movements.

9 Q Was that a concern to you?

10 A It was because I considered them to be valuable  
11 resources in terms of liaising with local nationals as we  
12 moved around. For example, we used them as interpreters. In  
13 addition, it would have put further strain on our manpower  
14 issues at the post.

15 Q And when you made movements off compound, what was  
16 their role? Were they the driver or were they the guide or  
17 both or --

18 A Typically we would have them in the driver's seat,  
19 because they, being locals, they were able to navigate much  
20 easier through the city. In addition, they could interact  
21 with the guards at checkpoints much easier, and we also used  
22 them to a great extent at the airport to liaison with the  
23 security apparatus at the airport to gain access to, like,  
24 the secure parking area or the VIP waiting area, things like  
25 that.

1           Q    Were you able to get that issue resolved? Did you  
2           or the other agents, were you able to get the issue resolved  
3           regarding their prohibition against making off-compound  
4           moves?

5           A    Yes. After the commander informed me of the  
6           development I arranged a meeting with his superior on  
7           compound. In that meeting we discussed -- I requested that  
8           they kind of expand the responsibilities that they would  
9           allow the QRF members to perform. We went back and forth  
10          about their concerns. Their concerns were that the  
11          off-compound movements were putting their members at greater  
12          risk and that the original intent of supplying the QRF  
13          members was to provide a security force for the compound and  
14          then that these off-compound movements were superfluous for  
15          that role.

16          Q    You said that one of their concerns was putting the  
17          QRF members at greater risk. What was your understanding of  
18          that, why would they have been at greater risk by being off  
19          compound?

20          A    I don't -- I can't say why they felt it was a  
21          greater risk. I imagine that any movement off of the  
22          compound into -- just like if you were to go out on 495 right  
23          now you'd be at greater risk than if you were to stay in this  
24          room. So that could be part of their calculation, but I  
25          can't really say why they felt that.

1           Q     And you said you were able to get the situation  
2 resolved?

3           A     We talked with them about drafting a new kind of  
4 agreement between us. I offered -- or we offered to increase  
5 the stipend that we provided to QRF members or allow them to  
6 eat in the cantina to provide some other kind of compensation  
7 for the additional responsibilities. I don't believe that we  
8 reached a resolution at that meeting, but he was to go back  
9 and they were going to discuss our proposals and deliver us  
10 an answer.

11          Q     And did you get that answer prior to the attack?

12          A     I don't recall getting a resolution to that issue  
13 before the attack.

14          Q     Let me just ask this. On the day that the  
15 Ambassador arrived, on the 10th, did any members of the QRF  
16 go with you off compound that day?

17          A     I don't remember them going off compound with us  
18 that day, no.

19          Q     And was that the same day that [REDACTED] left  
20 or did he leave the day before?

21          A     I'm not sure exactly if he left that morning or if  
22 he left the day before. I can't remember.

23          Q     Were you part of that movement to take him to the  
24 airport?

25          A     I was.

1 Q Do you recall any QRF members being with you when  
2 you took Mr. [REDACTED] to the airport?

3 A I can't remember if they were with us.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. The agreement that you worked out  
5 with this commander, was it put on paper?

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. In our meeting, no, we hadn't -- we didn't  
7 write anything out or sign any sort of written agreement.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So he was just going to go  
9 back with his superiors with what you had talked about.

10 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, that was my understanding.

11 Mr. Westmoreland. So you don't know of anything that  
12 was ever put on paper?

13 Mr. [REDACTED]. Regarding the --

14 Mr. Westmoreland. To try to expand their -- to go on  
15 these trips.

16 Mr. [REDACTED]. Right. No, as a result of the new  
17 development where they said they wouldn't support our  
18 movements off compound any longer, I'm not aware of any kind  
19 of written notification or anything.

20 Mr. Westmoreland. When the Ambassador was coming, and  
21 you knew that he was coming and whatever, and you all would  
22 have some of these meetings [REDACTED] were they ever  
23 asked about to comment on the amount of security that would  
24 come with the Ambassador that you're aware of?

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm not aware of any request for comment



1 from them regarding the security. If I understand you  
2 correctly, you're asking if --

3 Mr. Westmoreland. So they weren't asked, "Would you  
4 advise us to come in heavy or would you advise us to come in  
5 light"?

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, I don't remember any -- I don't remember  
7 us asking them that.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. So who made the determination that  
9 the two additional DS agents would be enough security for the  
10 Ambassador?

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't know who made that decision.

12 Mr. Westmoreland. Do you know who picked out the route  
13 that they would come?

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't know what route -- I don't know who  
15 decided the route they would take.

16 Mr. Westmoreland. Because if I understand it correctly,  
17 it was the same route that the British Ambassador had been  
18 attacked on.

19 Mr. [REDACTED]. I wasn't aware of that.

20 Mr. Westmoreland. The emergency action plan, was that  
21 ever put into effect when the attack started?

22 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes. You're referring to, like, our -- I  
23 would call them or what we called them were react plans.  
24 Essentially that was the breakdown of our emergency action  
25 plan. We had a react plan for a fire emergency, a react plan

1 for a chemical and biological attack, or a simple  
2 attack/react plan, which would be our response if the  
3 compound was attacked, and yes, we did initiate that  
4 attack/react plan.

5 Mr. Westmoreland. How about the evacuation plan, was it  
6 part of this or was it ever -- the evacuation plan, did you  
7 ever start setting things up to do that?

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. If memory serves me correctly, as part of  
9 the attack/react plan, one of the end results as we laid out  
10 in that plan would be to evaluate whether or not we should  
11 evacuate the compounds. In the moment, are you asking me in  
12 the moment of the attack, when it first became apparent that  
13 we were under attack we initiated the attack/react plan, I  
14 called it in over the radio, according to our established  
15 what we would say attack/react three times. The IDNS was  
16 sounded. But then as the night progressed it was very  
17 chaotic.

18 And so it was towards the end of the attack when it  
19 became apparent that the attacking force was regrouping for a  
20 counterattack that we made the decision to evacuate the  
21 compound. And it was then that I began to gather classified  
22 materials, and we packed up and headed out.

23 Mr. Westmoreland. You packed up and headed out. Was  
24 the Ambassador with you all when you --

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, unfortunately, we couldn't -- we never

1 recovered the Ambassador. We delayed our evacuation plans,  
2 as a matter of fact, until perhaps the last moment in order  
3 to try and recover the Ambassador from the Villa C.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. When you were doing this plan, had  
5 the GRS agents arrived at that point?

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. When we were evacuating the day he arrived?

7 Mr. Westmoreland. Yes.

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. Yes, they had already arrived by the  
9 time we made the decision to evacuate.

10 Mr. Westmoreland. So they were part of the evacuation  
11 plan.

12 Mr. [REDACTED]. Right. We were coordinating with them, and  
13 so they were providing us security as Agent [REDACTED] and myself  
14 went into the building to recover Smith and to attempt to  
15 recover the Ambassador. And in addition one of the GRS  
16 members assisted me in recovering our classified materials  
17 from the TOC. And then of course we informed them that we  
18 were going to evacuate and go to the Annex. So, yes, we  
19 coordinated with them.

20 Mr. Westmoreland. But as far as the 17th Brigade or the  
21 Blue Mountain, did they ever come to assist you in the  
22 evacuation?

23 Mr. [REDACTED]. The 17th Martyrs Brigade did arrive on site  
24 and provide security for us, but after the initial attack  
25 they were on site. And then later on when we all evacuated

1 out of the Annex and made our way to the airport it is my  
2 understanding that we had an escort from the 17th February  
3 Martyrs Brigade as well.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. That left from the Annex?

5 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

6 Mr. Westmoreland. And the only other thing I was going  
7 to ask is that you mentioned the American Corner.

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

9 Mr. Westmoreland. Did the Ambassador -- I thought the  
10 Ambassador is the one that went to the American Corner, to  
11 the grand opening.

12 Mr. [REDACTED]. The Ambassador, one of the big events on his  
13 visit was to be the attending of the grand opening.  
14 Unfortunately, it wasn't to be because, as you know, the  
15 attack intervened. I believe that event was to take place  
16 that following morning.

17 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So he never got --

18 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, to my knowledge he never went to the  
19 American Corner. I went there along with DCM [REDACTED] to  
20 kind of scout it out and to talk about how things were going  
21 to -- I'm not sure exactly what DCM [REDACTED] discussed as  
22 far as the grand opening, but I was there to kind of scout it  
23 out and provide a security survey to the RSO shop.

24 Mr. Westmoreland. One last question. You mentioned a  
25 chemical and biological attack, and Sharon had asked about

1 the different equipment that you would have had there. Did  
2 you have any night vision goggles?

3 Mr. [REDACTED] I think yes, we did have night vision  
4 goggles.

5 Mr. Westmoreland. Did you have gas masks?

6 Mr. [REDACTED] We did have gas masks, yes.

7 BY MS. JACKSON:

8 Q In following up then on a question that Congressman  
9 Westmoreland asked, you talked about you had an attack/react  
10 plan. Could you describe for us what that was?

11 A Okay. So in the event of an attack we would  
12 announce over the radio or loudspeakers attack/react three  
13 times and activate the IDNS, the duck-and-cover alarm system.  
14 My part of that since I was the TOC officer, my  
15 responsibility was to go to the TOC, to secure the TOC, to  
16 barricade the door, and then to immediately contact our  
17 Command Center, [REDACTED], as well as contact the  
18 17th February Martyrs Brigade, and spin up all of that  
19 support that we needed to come to support us in the event of  
20 an attack.

21 In addition, I was to monitor the cameras and maintain  
22 communications with our separate elements to keep them  
23 informed of what was going on on the compound through being  
24 able to see it on the cameras. Agent [REDACTED] was assigned  
25 to secure Villa C, secure the Ambassador and the rest of the

1 American personnel in the safe haven.

2 Q And Villa C was the one that you used for guests?

3 A Villa C was the principal sleeping quarters for  
4 most of the American mission. And then for everyone else,  
5 like the management officer, for example, and agents [REDACTED] and  
6 [REDACTED], they were to equip themselves appropriately and  
7 barricade in place.

8 In addition for our local guard force members, in our  
9 drills we had worked with them, they were to move to a secure  
10 location in kind of a service quarters next to Villa C and  
11 barricade themselves in but provide no kind of armed  
12 resistance, because they weren't armed. We didn't want them  
13 to become hurt. Their job was to provide simply the first  
14 notification that there was danger.

15 And then as to the QRF, their responsibilities were to  
16 establish communications with myself, whereupon I would  
17 direct them to where the threat was, and they would take up  
18 the appropriate fighting position and attempt to delay the  
19 attackers.

20 Q You said as part of your attack/react plan part of  
21 [REDACTED] Why was  
22 that?

23 A Well, we wanted to contact them because, number  
24 one, [REDACTED] we wanted  
25 them to have that awareness that there was an attack going on

1 so they could make appropriate security plans as well.

2 Number two, because as I had noted we had started to  
3 integrate our security plans and so part of that integration  
4 was the understanding that they would detail out a force if  
5 required to come and help us, to break us out, to come  
6 respond to an attack.

7 Q And who [REDACTED] were you working with as you  
8 came up with this more integrated plan?

9 A [REDACTED] their -- I'm not sure  
10 exactly what title you would use, but, like, their head of  
11 security, their manager.

12 Mr. Westmoreland. Was it [REDACTED]?

13 Mr. [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
15 Ms. Jackson. [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
16 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED]  
19 Mr. Westmoreland. Let me point this out to him. [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED]  
21 [REDACTED]  
22 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir.  
23 Mr. Westmoreland. [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED]

1 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

2 Mr. Westmoreland. And so I couldn't tell you their  
3 names right now -- well, I could the guys that wrote the book  
4 because they've been on TV a lot. And let me assure you, and  
5 I know what Congressman Cummings said, nobody ever knew your  
6 name on the Intelligence Committee, nobody ever mentioned  
7 your name, none of those guys ever mentioned your name, your  
8 name was never mentioned, none of the other DS agents' names  
9 were ever mentioned other than DS agent. [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED] I have absolutely no idea, but I don't think it  
11 was from this body.

12 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

13 Mr. Westmoreland. We respect your privacy and want you  
14 to keep it. To give you that, we were never given anybody's  
15 name, just had the code names. When these other guys came  
16 out in public, I have no idea what --

17 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir, I appreciate that.

18 BY MS. JACKSON:

19 Q Let me ask this. How far did your integration [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] get? Did it get reduced to writing or  
21 was it is a verbal understanding between you and the other DS  
22 agents [REDACTED]?<sup>1</sup>

23 A Well, we worked out our plans. I don't know if we  
24 ever had a written outline of what our responsibilities to  
25 them were or what their responsibilities to us were. In my



1 experience, [REDACTED], we had a  
2 very good working relationship, and it was mainly through  
3 face-to-face interaction. As I said before, we participated  
4 in their own drills, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

5 Q On their turf?

6 A At their location. As well, we gave them tours of  
7 our compounds so that in the eventuality that they would have  
8 to come, they would know where things were and what was what.

9 Q Did you ever meet [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

10 A Yes, I did.

11 Q Was he part of any of these discussions regarding  
12 integration?

13 A I am not aware if he was a part of that. I dealt  
14 mainly with [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED].

15 Q And you said you drilled with them on their turf?

16 A Yes, we took part in one of their emergency  
17 reaction drills.

18 Q And when that drill occurred did you physically  
19 start at the Special Mission Compound and have to respond to  
20 them?

21 A No, [REDACTED]

22 Q Did they participate in any of your drills or even  
23 observe any of the drills you would do with your QRF or local  
24 guard force?

25 A I can't remember if they participated or observed

1 one of our drills. I do know that we did describe to them  
2 and provide to them our attack/react plans, so they knew what  
3 they were. But I can't remember if they ever participated.

4 Q So you gave your written attack/react plan [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED]

6 A Well, we briefed them the react plans. I don't  
7 know if we gave them a physical copy.

8 Q Okay. Can you compare and contrast for me any  
9 differences in the security that you observed [REDACTED]  
10 versus the security at the Special Mission Compound?

11 A Yes. They had a smaller property [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED] I'll call them. So they had  
13 more manpower, they had a smaller footprint.

14 Q Was it also a walled villa?

15 A It was. They also had better visibility through  
16 their closed-circuit television system.

17 Q How about their weaponry?

18 A I would say their weaponry was on par with ours.

19 Q I want to take the next few minutes and switch  
20 gears and talk about some security events that occurred,  
21 attacks that occurred during the time that you were in  
22 Benghazi.

23 Mr. Westmoreland. Can I interrupt you?

24 Ms. Jackson. Of course you may.

25 Mr. Westmoreland. I have got to go to another meeting,

1       so I was just going to ask you, on this list of things,  
2       Exhibit 1 or --

3           Ms. Barrineau. Two.

4           Mr. Westmoreland. Two.

5           Ms. Jackson. This one? I'm sorry, Congressman, this  
6       one?

7           Mr. Westmoreland. Yes.

8           Ms. Jackson. Okay. Exhibit 2.

9           Mr. Westmoreland. On the back it talks about -- on the  
10       last page, it wasn't on the back, but on the last page --  
11       "Measures to consider." And I'm assuming this is after  
12       "Events triggering consideration of ordered departure." Are  
13       these things more in line with the Tripoli facility rather  
14       than the Benghazi facility?

15          Mr. [REDACTED]. Unfortunately, I don't know, sir. I never  
16       viewed the Tripoli -- I never viewed Tripoli's.

17          Mr. Westmoreland. So did you all get this? Because it  
18       says Mission Tripoli, so I'm assuming that's Benghazi?

19          Ms. Jackson. Mission Libya?

20          Mr. Westmoreland. I mean Libya, Mission Libya.

21          Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't recall reviewing this tripwire list,  
22       sitting here today, either for Benghazi or for Libya. So,  
23       unfortunately, I don't think I have a basis to compare the  
24       two.

25          Mr. Westmoreland. It says, "events triggering

1 consideration of ordered departure," and it says, "Measures  
2 to consider." It says, "Review contingency planning for  
3 military-assisted Noncombatant Evacuation Operation and  
4 consult with the Department regarding coordination with U.S.  
5 military on evacuation assistance." Do you have any  
6 knowledge of what that is? Did you all have a contingency  
7 plan for military-assisted evacuation?

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm not aware of such a plan. I never was  
9 responsible for planning or putting together that  
10 contingency, so, unfortunately, I'm not aware of that plan.

11 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So you weren't aware -- you  
12 didn't have any responsibility of putting it together. Were  
13 you aware of any contingency plan for a military evacuation?

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, sir, I can't remember encountering such  
15 a plan.

16 Mr. Westmoreland. Thank you.

17 Ms. Jackson. All right.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. Again, thank you for your service.

19 Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you.

20 BY MS. JACKSON:

21 Q Again, I want to talk about a few security issues,  
22 security concerns that occurred while you were in Benghazi,  
23 but first let me ask, were there any particular events that  
24 occurred, whether they were an attack, a protest, a threat  
25 that you received, that you recall that was concerning to

1       you?

2           A     I remember reading about there were numerous  
3       assassinations against Libyan officials during the period  
4       that I was in Benghazi. So that was naturally concerning to  
5       me.

6           Q     Were these officials with the new government?

7           A     Yes. If I'm not mistaken, I believe -- I think so,  
8       yes.

9           Q     Okay.

10          A     But these are all reports that I -- that were open  
11       source that I read on the news.

12          In addition, another attack, I believe it was against  
13       the Red Cross or Red Crescent facility in Benghazi. That was  
14       an alarming attack.

15          Q     It was a physical attack against Red Cross  
16       personnel?

17          A     If memory serves. And again, I'm recalling this  
18       based on what I read in the news concerning that. I believe  
19       it was a physical attack on the Red Cross, Red Crescent  
20       headquarters in Libya.

21                               [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

22                               was marked for identification.]

23           BY MS. JACKSON:

24          Q     I'm going to hand you what I have marked as Exhibit  
25       3 for the purposes of this interview. I tried to be green

1 and copy on both sides of the paper, so there is a little bit  
2 on the second. Exhibit 3 is State Department document number  
3 C05397187, marked sensitive, but unclassified. At the very  
4 top it says from a [REDACTED] to a [REDACTED], but  
5 below that it appears to be an email chain that at the top is  
6 from Ambassador Stevens to [REDACTED], dated August 27,  
7 2012. I think that's sufficient to identify it for the  
8 record.

9 Agent [REDACTED], I don't see that you are copied on this  
10 email anymore, but I'm going to ask you to review it, and  
11 then I'm going to ask you if you're familiar with the  
12 information that is discussed in this email, because I do  
13 note that in the lower level that it has been sent to [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED].

15 So my first question to you will be, was this  
16 information communicated to you?

17 A I don't recognize these emails. I never -- no, I  
18 don't believe that the contents of this email was ever  
19 conveyed to me.

20 Q Okay. So as of the end of August -- let me ask  
21 this. By the end of August, shortly before -- within the  
22 2-week period before the Ambassador's trip, were you aware of  
23 increasing concerns regarding the stability of Benghazi?

24 A I was aware of an increase in violence in the city.  
25 As I mentioned before, the assassinations. Primarily, I was

1 focused on my responsibilities on the compounds and the  
2 movements and day-to-day operations. So I wasn't -- I guess  
3 I wasn't really tuned into the high level, as you say,  
4 stability of the country.

5 Q I notice in Ambassador Steven's response to R50  
6 [REDACTED] that he says, and I quote, "Definitely worth pulsing  
7 the security/political community." And then, "President  
8 Magariaf told [REDACTED] and me yesterday that he expected trouble  
9 in the coming days." Were you ever directed to pulse the  
10 security/political community in and around Benghazi? And if  
11 you didn't do it, were you aware whether any of your fellow  
12 ARSOs did so?

13 A I would on occasion ask the QRF if they heard  
14 anything about the security situation, what was going on in  
15 the city and in the country. I don't know if it was ever in  
16 response to this email or -- generally it wasn't -- it was  
17 never directed by Tripoli, it was just a practice that I had.

18 Q You just did it as a matter of good practice and a  
19 matter of course?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Okay.

22 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4  
23 was marked for identification.]  
24  
25

1 BY MS. JACKSON:

2 Q I'm going to hand you a much shorter email that  
3 I've marked as Exhibit 4 and ask if you would take a look at  
4 that. I notice that it is for the record document C05394398,  
5 marked no classification mark, but it is an email from [REDACTED]  
6 [REDACTED] to [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]  
7 dated September 2, 2012?

8 A Do you recall receiving this email?

9 A I don't remember -- I'm sorry, I don't remember  
10 receiving this specific email, although I do see myself  
11 listed in the address line.

12 Q Do you recall this event?

13 A I do vaguely remember this event. There was a  
14 bombing at the Tibesti Hotel.

15 Q And approximately how far was the Tibesti Hotel  
16 from the compound?

17 A It was several miles. The Tibesti Hotel was in the  
18 core of city to the north, near almost to the waterfront, to  
19 the harbor. So it was fairly far away.

20 Q And it is sent from an individual who is [REDACTED] -- I'm  
21 nothing even going to try and pronounce it -- it appears to  
22 be spelled [REDACTED] Do you recall that individual?

23 A No, I don't know that individual.

24 Q And was this incident a concern to you and the  
25 other agents?



1           A    It was and we tracked this incident. I don't  
2    recall any specific conversations regarding this incident,  
3    but this attack, like many of the others, were ones that we  
4    tracked. One of my responsibilities was to track incidents  
5    in and around the city. As such, yes, we were concerned.

6           Q    Do you have a sense or do you know who was the  
7    general clientele at the Tibesti Hotel, such as did members  
8    of the media stay there, did other Western countries reside  
9    there? If you know, was there a typical type of clientele at  
10   the Tibesti Hotel?

11          A    My understanding was the Tibesti Hotel was the  
12   nicest hotel in Benghazi at the time. And I really don't  
13   know if they had a regular type of clientele, but certainly I  
14   remember it being one of the few and the nicest hotel in the  
15   city.

16          Q    Did other foreign delegations reside at the Tibesti  
17   Hotel, if you know, such as did the British stay there when  
18   they came to town, were the Italians there, were U.N.  
19   personnel there, if you know?

20          A    I can't remember who stayed at the Tibesti Hotel,  
21   no.

22                               [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 5  
23                               was marked for identification.]

24           BY MS. JACKSON:

25          Q    Let me now show you what I've marked as Exhibit 5.

1 Again, this is a short email with a long distribution list.  
2 It is State Department document C05394396, has no  
3 classification mark. But, again, I notice an email from  
4 [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and yourself, dated  
5 September 3, 2012, and ask you if you recalled seeing this  
6 email before.

7 A I don't remember seeing this exact email, although  
8 I do recognize the subject line. [REDACTED] received these daily  
9 threat updates and would pass them on to the rest of our  
10 shop.

11 Q What is a daily threat update?

12 A I believe we had discussed it earlier, but there  
13 was, like, a commercial service that would compile events in  
14 and around the city and then distribute that out to whoever  
15 was in the mailing list. Of course we can see here [REDACTED] was  
16 one of those, as well as the Tripoli RSO distribution.

17 Q Was there a Benghazi RSO distribution list?

18 A Yes, I believe there was.

19 Q Okay. And when you were there you would have been  
20 part of it?

21 A Yes.

22 Q I also see there is something called

23 [REDACTED]@bluemountaingroup.co.uk. It's the very last one.

24 A Uh-huh.

25 Q Do you see that?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Do you recognize that?

3 A I don't recognize that email, although Blue  
4 Mountain Group was the name of our contracted security group.

5 Q Do you recall the event that is described in  
6 Exhibit 5 or the information that is contained in Exhibit 5?

7 A I don't. It doesn't give a lot of detail as to  
8 what it's referring to, so I don't recall specifically what  
9 they're talking about, although I can infer that perhaps  
10 they're talking about the car bombing that we just reviewed  
11 in Exhibit 4.

12 Q Because they're talking about a car bombing?

13 A And the date is one day after.

14 Q The last paragraph of this email says, "Keeping our  
15 profile low and our journeys to an absolute minimum are one  
16 major factor is" -- is, I assume that means in -- "reducing  
17 our risk." Did you share in that sentiment?

18 A Yes, some of our practices to -- some of our  
19 security practices were obviously to -- we wanted to reduce  
20 our profile as we journeyed throughout the city. In  
21 addition, we tried to limit movements outside of the compound  
22 because of the previously mentioned shortages in personnel  
23 that we had.

24 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 6  
25 was marked for identification.]

1 BY MS. JACKSON:

2 Q I'm now going to hand you what I've marked as  
3 Exhibit Number 6, and it is double sided. It's not that  
4 long. However, I'm going to focus on the first two  
5 paragraphs -- I'm sorry, paragraph 2 and paragraph number 3.  
6 And for the record I would note that this is State Department  
7 document number C05262795. It is marked sensitive but  
8 unclassified. And it bears a date of September 4, 2012.

9 Are you familiar with this document?

10 A No, I'm not.

11 Q You have not seen this before?

12 A I don't remember reading this.

13 Q Okay. Are you familiar with the issue that is  
14 addressed in paragraph number 2, that on September 1 Libyan  
15 officials issued a maximum state of alert?

16 A Yes, I do remember that.

17 Q Okay. What do you recall about that?

18 A I remember that at that time there was a lot of  
19 trepidation among the authorities in Libya as they approached  
20 the September 1 anniversary of -- I can't remember exactly --  
21 I believe it was their Green Revolution or something. There  
22 was an event that they were afraid would be I guess a  
23 touchstone for Qadhafist forces, I think, in the country.

24 Q So it was a countrywide maximum state of alert?

25 A I don't know if it was a countrywide state of

1 alert.

2 Q Certainly was in the Benghazi area?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Okay. Based on that, did you and the other agents  
5 undertake any actions or reactions?

6 A Yes. As usual, we monitored the threat  
7 intelligence leading up to that day. I can't remember if it  
8 was specifically the night of September the 1st, but there  
9 was a night where -- there was a night that we kind of  
10 upgraded our security posture to have an agent standing on  
11 post on the roof of Villa C throughout the night, and we  
12 traded off in shifts. Again, I can't remember if it was  
13 specifically in response. I can't remember the date that  
14 that occurred or if it was in response to this event.

15 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 7

16 was marked for identification.]

17 Ms. Jackson. And before I finish my last hour, let me  
18 do one more.

19 Ms. Barrineau. Before you go there, just to clarify,  
20 did you say the roof of Villa C or did you not?

21 Mr. [REDACTED] The roof of Villa C. If I'm  
22 misremembering --

23 Ms. Barrineau. No, no, that's cool.

24 Mr. [REDACTED] -- that would have been the roof of the  
25 villa where we had our core sleeping quarters for principal

1 officers.

2 Ms. Barrineau. Cool, thanks.

3 BY MS. JACKSON:

4 Q I've handed you what again is a very short email  
5 marked Exhibit 7. It is State Department document number  
6 C05394394, and it is to, among others, [REDACTED] and  
7 yourself, dated September 5, 2012. And, again, it is a daily  
8 threat upgrade and news summary. Is this a similar type  
9 commercial threat briefing that you and others received?

10 A Yes. This is, if I'm not mistaken, is from the  
11 same distributor of the message on Exhibit 5.

12 Q Okay.

13 A And kind of reporting on the events of the previous  
14 night, yet not detailing any specific threat. It's just  
15 reminding us to remain vigilant.

16 Q And I would like to read the last paragraph of this  
17 document that says, quote, "It is clear that both criminal  
18 and insurgent elements are gaining confidence once again so  
19 we must be increasingly vigilant as we go out about our  
20 essential business," end quote.

21 What was your understanding, if you had one, about what  
22 the writer means about the criminal and insurgent elements?

23 A I don't know what the writer means by that other  
24 than what he has written here.

25 Q Did you share a belief that there was both criminal

1 and insurgent elements increasing in nature and scope in  
2 Benghazi?

3 A I did believe that there was a serious problem with  
4 violence in the city and in the country as a whole and that  
5 there wasn't a very strong foundation of the rule of law. I  
6 can't speak to any kind of a marked trend from bad to worse,  
7 but that is something that I noted, yes, there was a lot of  
8 violence.

9 Q Did you note a similar lack of sophistication  
10 regarding the law enforcement in and around Benghazi? Or  
11 asked a different way, what was your assessment of the local  
12 law enforcement that you had to rely on?

13 A I never had interactions with the local law  
14 enforcement outside of trying to get them to stay outside of  
15 our gates, to have a manned post outside of our gates. And  
16 so I, unfortunately, never had a chance to really see them in  
17 action and gauge their capabilities. But my understanding at  
18 the time was that they were not well funded, they didn't have  
19 a reliable source of revenue, so it probably impacted their  
20 performance.

21 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 8

22 was marked for identification.]

23 BY MS. JACKSON:

24 Q Let me try and do -- I think I have just a few more  
25 minutes, maybe 3. Let me switch gears very quickly to

1 preplanning for Ambassador Stevens' visit. I'm going to hand  
2 you what I've marked as Exhibit 8. And I would note that  
3 this is State Department document number C05411351, an email  
4 from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], dated  
5 Sunday, September 9, 2012.

6 Agent [REDACTED], do you recall this email?

7 A I don't specifically remember receiving the email,  
8 although I do see myself noted on the address line.

9 Q Okay. As you read through this document, do you  
10 recall that this represents a list of things that needed to  
11 be done prior to the Ambassador's visit?

12 A Right. Here [REDACTED] has written some of the things  
13 that, as he terms it, things we need to do in preparation for  
14 the visit.

15 Q Can you go down this list and elaborate on what  
16 things needed to be done under this what I consider to be  
17 like a checklist or to-do list?

18 A Okay. And, again, unfortunately, I can't remember  
19 the exact context for each of these items and I can't really  
20 get into [REDACTED] intentions as he was drafting this, but I'll  
21 do my best.

22 Q Okay.

23 A It says develop call signs. I imagine that he  
24 wanted to finish developing -- to confirm what our individual  
25 call signs were to be when we are communicating with each



1 other over radio.

2 Q Would that be like a number or a --

3 A Like a code name or --

4 Q Code name?

5 A -- something like that.

6 Q It could be something like TOC officer?

7 A Right.

8 Q Or would it be more --

9 A I'm not sure. I don't believe that we ever settled  
10 on specific call signs or something like that. I think  
11 [REDACTED] call sign that he wanted was [REDACTED]. And it was just  
12 whatever --

13 Q Did you have one?

14 A I can't remember my call sign that I settled on.

15 Q The second item is confirm Annex support. What can  
16 you tell us about that?

17 A Again, I can't -- unfortunately, in the years that  
18 have passed I can't remember the context. I can't remember  
19 the context of that.

20 Q Okay. The next item is confirm Annex security  
21 brief.

22 A This one is a little more explicit. Again, I'm not  
23 sure what [REDACTED] intention was, but I believe it to be to  
24 finalize our briefing of the GRS on our security plans.

25 Q Do you recall whether the Ambassador was going to

1 receive a security briefing at the Annex?

2 A I don't remember.

3 Q Okay. Going down a couple because we've talked  
4 about the react plan, what about day and night drill?

5 A Again, unfortunately, I can't remember exactly what  
6 he's referring to here.

7 Q How about sleeping locations?

8 A Unfortunately, I --

9 Q Was there any discussion or concern that everyone  
10 should sleep overnight in one building versus two?

11 A I can't remember our conversations regarding that.

12 I do remember we did talk about who would be assigned where.

13 Like, for example, my sleeping quarters were in the TOC

14 building, and that made sense since I was the TOC officer.

15 And we had to assign -- we had limited sleeping space or

16 space for people, so we had to go through kind of assigning

17 people to available rooms.

18 Q Could you have located -- had everyone sleep in one  
19 building other than the TOC officer? Did you have enough  
20 room in any of the other villas?

21 A We didn't have enough room in any of the villas to  
22 have all of our personnel in one building and still each have  
23 a bed to sleep on.

24 Ms. Jackson. Okay. All right. And that's I think all  
25 the questions I have about this. And I see that I am out of

1 time in my hour. So we'll go off the record and take another  
2 short recess and reconvene -- reconfigure and reconvene.

3 [Recess.]  
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BY MS. SAWYER:

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Q I would just note it's 5 until 4, 3:55 p.m.

4

5

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8

I'm just going to touch on a couple of topics that you've explored with us already but, hopefully, relatively briefly. In the last hour, you were shown some exhibits that should still be in front of you. Three of those, Exhibit 4, 5, and 7 --

9

A Yes.

10

11

12

13

14

Q -- you had described as daily reports that you were receiving along with some of other folks in Benghazi that would recap incidents that were occurring in Benghazi. Do you know how, if at all, this information was conveyed to Tripoli?

15

16

17

A I do not know how it was conveyed to Tripoli, although I will note, here on Exhibit 5, Tripoli RSO is listed.

18

19

20

Q So some of them may have been gone directly. Was that in your area of responsibility to convey this information?

21

22

23

A No. I believe the receipt of this information and liaison with other international organizations was part of Agent [REDACTED] portfolio.

24

25

Q Okay. So you're not sure if this was discussed, these particular incidents relayed here were discussed with

1 personnel in Tripoli?

2 A No, I'm not.

3 Q Okay. I think in the first two, Exhibit 4 refers  
4 to an incident, sounds like a car bomb, and Exhibit 5 also a  
5 car bomb. The dates of these are September 2 and 3. With  
6 regard to that particular threat, the threat of a car bomb,  
7 did you feel that -- did you guys -- did the Benghazi team  
8 discuss taking steps to address the potential threat of a car  
9 bomb?

10 A No. We didn't develop plans specifically to  
11 address car bombs outside of what was already our standard  
12 practices and our training that we had already received. As  
13 far as our movements in and around the city, we tried to take  
14 reasonable precautions like having a low profile; by that I  
15 mean we usually drove without our diplomatic plates mounted.  
16 We also drove in Toyotas, armored Toyotas as opposed to,  
17 let's say, a Cadillac or some other luxury vehicle that would  
18 have drawn a lot of attention.

19 Q So, with regard to this particular type of threat,  
20 did you feel that you were well prepared and had taken or had  
21 in place adequate plans to address this type of a threat?

22 A Yes. We -- as part of our standard procedures, I  
23 think that we had adequately addressed the threat of a  
24 car-bomb attack in terms of a car bomb against our compound.  
25 You know, we had trained our local guard force in screening

1 the vehicles to look for tampering and devices. And, in  
2 addition, we all had had a lot of experience from our time in  
3 the military or through our training with DS on how to  
4 identify suspicious vehicles, suspicious behavior, and things  
5 like that.

6 Q And we talked both at the last hour and when I was  
7 talking to you, some hours ago now, about September 1 being a  
8 significant anniversary in Libya. And some of these reports  
9 come up around September 1, and some of the exhibits dealt  
10 with concerns -- it sounded like -- hold on one moment --  
11 Exhibit 6, which you had talked about, in that first  
12 paragraph, indicated September 1, quote, "maximum alert," and  
13 you talked a little about that in the last hour.

14 You know, some of the concerns being expressed there  
15 were that former Qadhafi regime officials were being targeted  
16 and some of the threat reports indicate that there were  
17 ongoing and renewed assassination attempts of those regime  
18 officials. Did you or any of your colleagues take these  
19 incidents as an indication that there was an increased threat  
20 to Americans in Benghazi?

21 A The attacks against former regime officials?

22 Q Yes.

23 A No. Although, we were tracking those incidents, we  
24 did not -- or at least I did not view them as a trend that  
25 would eventually lead to attacks against foreigners or U.S.

1 officials. I viewed them as kind of like revenge attacks  
2 against formally powerful Qadhafi officials, kind of a  
3 settling of scores after the ouster of Qadhafi's government.

4 Q And do you know whether your opinion and view on  
5 that was shared with your colleagues in Benghazi? And by  
6 "your colleagues," I'm just talking about the folks [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED] at the mission compound.

8 A I can't remember ever explicitly discussing how we  
9 viewed the trend, these incidents. I knew they were aware,  
10 as I was, about these incidents, but I can't remember if we  
11 ever have discussed the trend.

12 Q And what about the [REDACTED]? Do you  
13 recall discussing any sense of a trend from these incidents  
14 [REDACTED]?

15 A No, I don't.

16 Q So, just to touch briefly on, you did talk about  
17 some increased security steps that you took at the mission  
18 around the September 1 anniversary. And it sounded like --  
19 and correct me if I've missed the details -- you decided on  
20 that particular evening to have some presence on the roof.  
21 And what was the purpose of that presence on the roofs?

22 A Again, as I stated before, I'm unsure the exact  
23 date of the -- of when we instituted that. Unfortunately,  
24 the fog of time has kind of like jumbled up the exact dates  
25 when these things have occurred, but the -- but we did that

1 in response to some kind of heightened security alert.

2 Unfortunately, I can't say explicitly what it was.

3 Q And do you recall how many nights that lasted? Was  
4 that a one-night concern? Was that a stretch over several  
5 nights?

6 A We did that for one night.

7 Q And it had --

8 Ms. Jackson. I'm sorry. I didn't catch that answer.

9 Mr. [REDACTED]. We did that for one night.

10 BY MS. SAWYER:

11 Q And why was the decision made or what was the  
12 assessment that it wasn't then necessary for a second night  
13 to take that precaution?

14 A I don't know exactly why we decided to not have  
15 somebody up on the roof 24 hours a day. In my mind, I felt  
16 that the precautions that we had taken already were  
17 sufficient, and through our own internal drills, we responded  
18 very quickly to threats in terms of like, if an attack were  
19 to occur at night, we had all of our equipment strategically  
20 placed.

21 Of course, for my part, I was the TOC officer. So it  
22 was very easy for me to get into the TOC. Part of our  
23 security procedure was to lock everything down anyway before  
24 turning in for the night. And so, in my mind, given the  
25 threat intelligence that we had, that was sufficient.



1 Q Now, Exhibit 8, just to touch briefly on one of the  
2 items, this is the document that had the -- yes, you've got  
3 it. The third item there that you touched -- talked about a  
4 little bit was just -- and again, understanding that you did  
5 not author this. But the third item down just says, "confirm  
6 Annex security brief," and you had indicated you thought  
7 that, I think you had indicated that [REDACTED] was setting up or  
8 doing a briefing. Do you recall, while the Ambassador was in  
9 town, whether or not there was a security brief given to the  
10 Ambassador by the Annex?

11 A I can't remember if he -- I can't remember if he  
12 visited the Annex or a member of the Annex came to the  
13 compound to brief him at the special mission. I can't  
14 remember.

15 Q But you think that a briefing did occur?

16 A Again, I don't remember a specific incident where  
17 that occurred. You're asking me to kind of generalize or  
18 what I would think happen. I really can't say.

19 Q Understood. So just to try to keep it clear on the  
20 record, you are not sure if there was a briefing during the  
21 Ambassador's visit. I know that you had -- [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED] but  
23 during his visit, do you have a recollection -- and it's  
24 certainly fine if you can't recall -- as to whether or not  
25 there was a briefing, whether it was at the Annex or at the

1 mission, of the Ambassador himself?

2 A Unfortunately, I can't remember. /

3 Q So one of the things you had talked about last hour  
4 that came up I think almost in the immediate runup to the  
5 Ambassador's visit was the dispute that occurred with  
6 February 17 around off-compound moves.

7 Ms. Sawyer. So I did want to show you what I'm going to  
8 mark as deposition Exhibit 9.

9 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 9  
10 was marked for identification.]

11 Ms. Sawyer. It's a long document. I'm not going to ask  
12 you about all of it, but please take your time. We can go  
13 off the record even for a sec so that you don't feel that  
14 you're -- we're on the clock.

15 I'm going to ask you primarily about the conversation  
16 that begins on the third page, and there's an email from [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED] that goes to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] primarily. You're  
18 cc'd on that. And as you'll see, this is part of that. It's  
19 capturing at least part of the conversation around that  
20 dispute. We can go off the record for a second.

21 [Recess.]

22 Ms. Sawyer. Back on the record.

23 BY MS. SAWYER:

24 Q So, Mr. [REDACTED], I would just want to start with  
25 Exhibit 9 on page 3. It's a 6-page document, and it's an

1 email thread that captures at least part of the conversation  
2 around the dispute, the contract dispute, or the at least  
3 work duties responsibilities dispute that was going on with  
4 February 17. And, as you'll see, that chain, at least the  
5 part that I'm asking you to take a look at, is dated -- it's  
6 an email sent from [REDACTED], who my understanding was  
7 the RSO at the time in Benghazi. It's sent Saturday,  
8 September 8, 2012, and you're included just on the cc line.  
9 And Mr. [REDACTED] is reporting there that you all were just  
10 notified that evening, so, on September 8, just a few days,  
11 that is right before the Ambassador is coming to town?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And that first sentence, I'll just read it for the  
14 record: "We were just notified by our 17 February Brigade  
15 QRF this evening that they were told by their leadership to  
16 no longer support off-compound moves and only provide  
17 internal defense."

18 So was it your understanding that this dispute did  
19 center solely on the off-compound moves?

20 A Yes, that was my understanding.

21 Q And it didn't -- the dispute itself didn't deal  
22 with their internal defense or the additional support that  
23 February 17 would -- had agreed to provide from off-compound  
24 resources in the event of an attack or an emergency?

25 A Right. I never got the impression from speaking

1 with the QRF commander or with his superiors in our meetings  
2 that their support of our internal defense would be that that  
3 agreement was changed, only that they did not want their QRF  
4 members -- only that they did not want their QRF members to  
5 support us off compound.

6 Q And then I'll just jump you a little bit forward in  
7 time to the first page. And a day later, on Sunday,  
8 Mr. [REDACTED] is again reporting on this; you're again cc'd.  
9 And the first paragraph there indicates that there was a  
10 meeting that occurred at some time between the first email  
11 and the second, with the February 17 Brigade. And I think  
12 you had mentioned that you had been involved in that meeting.  
13 Do you recall that that was the case?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And on page 2 of this document -- I'll just have  
16 you turn the page, I'll just try to streamline it -- that  
17 first full paragraph, which is the second paragraph from the  
18 top -- so that one in there -- there is a mention that you  
19 had tried to -- that as part of the conversation what had  
20 come up was what the work requirements were on the internal  
21 defense, it sounds like. Is that accurate?

22 A Yes, that -- that -- I don't remember specifically  
23 what I came up with, but I do note that here it says that  
24 Acting RSO [REDACTED] says that I did rework the QRF work  
25 requirements.

1           Ms. Sawyer. So I'm going to show you what I'm going to  
2 mark as Exhibit 10 for identification purposes.

3                           [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 10  
4                           was marked for identification.]

5           BY MS. SAWYER:

6           Q     I will tell you that it may or may not be the work  
7 requirements that you worked up, but I'll have you confirm  
8 or -- and I'm going to tell all of you, it's a 2-page  
9 document because it bears the 2 pages. I kept the 2 pages  
10 together because the Bates number for the two pages is the  
11 same. You'll see that number down in the bottom, Mr. [REDACTED]?

12           A     Uh-huh.

13           Q     I don't get the sense they're necessarily related,  
14 but I didn't want to separate them. So I'm just going to  
15 direct your attention to the second page of Exhibit 10 and  
16 just ask you if you recall -- it is a document that is titled  
17 "Quick Reaction Forcez (QRF) Work Requirements." Do you  
18 think that the work requirement document that you had worked  
19 on for this meeting?

20           A     Yes. I remember working on -- I seem to remember  
21 working on work requirements. I can't say with 100 percent  
22 certainty that -- I don't seem to have signed my name to it,  
23 but I do remember working on the work requirements now, and  
24 these would seem to be consistent with the work requirements  
25 that I had of the QRF, as the QRF liaison.

1           Q     All right. And then just returning back to  
2     Exhibit 9, which was the email threads. On that second page,  
3     again, where there was a discussion of the work requirements  
4     that you had been working on, if you'll see in that second  
5     paragraph, there's a discussion of the fact that those were  
6     reviewed with the QRF commander, and that, quote, "This draft  
7     MOA appeared to be well-received."

8           Did you have a recollection of that conversation and  
9     whether there seemed to be mutual agreement between the  
10    mission personnel and February 17 that the work requirements  
11    would be agreed on and that that would be a workable solution  
12    going forward even if it hadn't yet been solidified?

13          A     Unfortunately, I can't remember how they reacted to  
14    the work requirements at the time.

15          Q     Okay. And then a little further down, if you skip  
16    the middle paragraph, which, again, just reiterates, quote,  
17    that, "they indicated they would continue to support internal  
18    defense of the mission with the on-compound QRF and nearby  
19    off-compound response personnel at the current rate." But,  
20    after that, the next paragraph says, "The meeting ended on  
21    good terms."

22          Was it your sense that you had left that meeting on good  
23    terms with February 17?

24          A     Yes, in my recollection, the meeting ended with --  
25    I can't remember having made any kind of definitive -- of us

1 making any definitive agreement, but I do remember that there  
2 was some agreement that we could -- that is to say, I do  
3 remember that we had a good starting point for eventually  
4 reaching an agreement, although, as I said, I'm not sure that  
5 we actually kind of solidified an agreement yet.

6 Q Yeah. I think it doesn't seem that way, in  
7 particular, because, you know, just to kind of conclude with  
8 this exhibit, there is then right under that from  
9 Mr. [REDACTED] kind of a recommendation of options. He says,  
10 in no order, but he lays out a number of options moving  
11 forward, one of which is to go forward with kind of a  
12 memorandum of agreement and keep things pretty much as is, I  
13 think, with your fleshed-out work requirements though.

14 Another is to do direct hires, and, potentially, it  
15 looks like direct hires from your existing pool of  
16 February 17 QRF. Was that your recollection that they would  
17 potentially be brought on as direct hires?

18 A Right. I remember some of the discussions about  
19 how we could move forward from having this militia-sponsored  
20 QRF group, which on its face was not an ideal situation  
21 because we didn't have any direct control over what they  
22 would or would not do since we were not employing them. They  
23 were there at the behest of their command. And so one of the  
24 options was to hire them on as local hires, for them to cut  
25 their ties with the militia and for us to bring on a

1 completely new locally engaged force of, say, body guards, an  
2 armed QRF force. And if I recall correctly, we had talked  
3 about just bringing existing QRF members over since we had  
4 already done some work to vet them.

5 Q So it was your sense -- and sounds like a shared  
6 sense -- that having more direct control over some of the  
7 potentially prior February 17 folks would be helpful?

8 A Yes.

9 Q And so it looks like from this document that there  
10 were known problems with February 17 and that there was an  
11 ongoing effort in the works to really try to solve those. Is  
12 that a fair assessment?

13 A Yes, I think that's fair.

14 Q So it wasn't the case that it was unknown that  
15 there was troubles with the security and that no one was  
16 trying to do anything about it?

17 A Yes. In regards to the QRF and our arrangement  
18 with the 17 February Martyr's Brigade, I think it was well  
19 understood that it was not an ideal arrangement. However, it  
20 was the best that we had available to us at the time. And we  
21 were making steps to transition. If we were to stay in  
22 Benghazi for an extended period of time, say, past December,  
23 we were trying to make -- lay the groundwork for moving away  
24 from the QRF to a more traditional type of personal services  
25 agreement, contracted body guards or locally hired body



1 guards, something like that.

2 Q Okay. Now, you had mentioned a little earlier in  
3 the day that -- and I don't recall if it was specific to the  
4 morning of the 11th or the morning of the 10th, so we'll just  
5 cover both mornings -- you said that the Annex would provide  
6 a daily briefing for the mission on threat -- was it a threat  
7 assessment or just a --

8 A Well, we would try to talk with the station about  
9 threat intelligence for the days, to ask if they had any  
10 intelligence about specific threats against Americans or  
11 chief-of-mission personnel.

12 Q And, on the morning of September 10, when the  
13 Ambassador was scheduled to come in that day, was there  
14 anything that they relayed to you about a specific threat,  
15 any threats against American interests?

16 A No, they had no specific intelligence regarding  
17 threats or attacks for that day.

18 Q And you don't recall whether there was then a later  
19 briefing with the Ambassador from the Annex?

20 A No, I don't.

21 Q And then the morning of the 11th, did you -- did  
22 the mission -- and would you have been the person to receive  
23 the briefing from the mission, or would that have been  
24 someone else on the mission compound?

25 A Well, to clarify, I thought in your previous

1 question that we were referring to the morning of the 11th.

2 Q Okay.

3 A And so, yes, on the morning of the 11th, I spoke  
4 with -- because I was the TOC officer, the duty officer, I  
5 carried the RSO's duty telephone. And so when they would  
6 call in, when the Annex would call into the special mission,  
7 I would receive those calls and then route them to the  
8 appropriate person.

9 Q Okay. So, going back to the 10th, would you have  
10 been the person to receive the -- you would have been  
11 responsible for the TOC on the 10th. So just -- and maybe I  
12 was only clear on my very last question. I don't want to go  
13 back to the 10th if we don't have to. I had just asked if  
14 you had received anything from the Annex on the 10th about  
15 specific threats.

16 A I can't remember specifically talking on the  
17 morning on the 10th with the Annex about threat intelligence.

18 Q Okay. And do you recall having that conversation  
19 on the morning of the 11th?

20 A Yes.

21 Q So you did have a conversation with personnel at  
22 the Annex about threat assessment on the morning of the 11th?

23 A Right. I remember in the morning of the 11th, I  
24 was in the TOC, and I answered their call that morning.

25 Q And do you remember if it was the chief of base who

1 called and provided that information or someone else?

2 A I can't remember who it was.

3 Q And did they convey that there was any concern  
4 about specific threat, a threat against American interests,  
5 heightened security needs?

6 A No. I didn't -- no, they didn't convey any  
7 specific threat intelligence that morning.

8 Q Okay. And had anything happened -- so the  
9 Ambassador came in on the 10th.

10 A Uh-huh.

11 Q Had anything happened from the time he came through  
12 that morning -- so on the 10th really -- that caused any  
13 concern for security-related reasons? So just on the first  
14 day, even before the 11th, did anything happen?

15 A I can't remember any specific incidents that  
16 occurred on the 10th, no.

17 Q So, the morning of the 11th, you had had the  
18 conversation with the Annex. Can you just describe for us  
19 whether anything happened in the course of the day on the  
20 11th that caused any concerns for security-related reasons?

21 A No. If I remember correctly, all of his meetings,  
22 all of Ambassador Stevens' meetings were scheduled to be on  
23 compound, and we monitored the screening for those visitors  
24 and escorted the visitors to the villa and everything went  
25 according to plan for that day.

1           Q     And why for that day was the decision made to  
2     schedule all the meetings on compound?

3           A     Well, we had worked with the Ambassador and his  
4     staff to limit the number of off-compound movements because  
5     of -- because we felt that we didn't have enough personnel to  
6     support a sufficient detail off compound in addition to  
7     having an acceptable number of agents remain behind in the  
8     mission. And so we made a compromise to limit most of his  
9     meetings -- most of his planned meetings during the trip to  
10    be on compound with the exception, I think, of the opening of  
11    the American corner.

12          Q     So the precautions that you were taking were not in  
13    response to a specific threat, warning, or any specific  
14    concern about targeting of either the Ambassador or  
15    Americans?

16          A     No. We were trying to balance security with the  
17    Ambassador's desires to conduct his diplomatic mission, and  
18    you know, I don't know exactly what kind of -- what goals or  
19    agenda he needed to accomplish, but we just did our best,  
20    given the resources that we had, to try to accommodate both  
21    sides of the coin, security and the completion of his  
22    mission.

23          Q     And did you interact directly much with the  
24    Ambassador while he was there?

25          A     We spoke briefly. There were some pleasantries

1       exchanged, but I didn't have very much professional  
2       interaction with him, no.

3       Q     And did you get any sense that he was upset about  
4       the security precautions that had been taken in terms of  
5       limiting, to some extent at least, his off-compound  
6       movements? Did he make any complaints about doing that?

7       A     I don't remember him complaining to me about the  
8       security arrangements as they were. He seemed very  
9       optimistic and very upbeat. No, I didn't -- I don't remember  
10      any complaints from him.

11      Q     And did he express any concerns to you about  
12      security matters, that it was not secure enough or he had a  
13      concern about his or your safety, anyone's safety on  
14      compound?

15      A     No, I don't know how he felt, but, no, he never  
16      expressed to me any kind of concern for his safety or our  
17      safety.

18      Q     Okay. So I would like to at this point provide you  
19      the opportunity just to talk with us in a -- if you're  
20      comfortable, I'll prompt you with some questions perhaps  
21      about the actual attacks. I want to let you know I don't  
22      know if you have had an opportunity to read the ARB report.  
23      Have you ever had that --

24      A     I have reviewed it, yes.

25      Q     Yeah. I don't know if you've gotten a chance to

1 see the classified version as well as the unclassified?

2 A I don't believe that I have read the classified  
3 version, no.

4 Q Well, the classified version is similar in some  
5 respects to the unclass. And, you know, before we get to  
6 this, I just want to assure you that while I think the report  
7 was, you know, very thorough and critical in many respects  
8 about security-related concerns, you know, the one thing that  
9 it was not critical about was the performance of you or any  
10 of your team that night and, in fact, was very laudatory  
11 about the tremendous efforts that all of you made, both to,  
12 you know, safeguard security and also to take steps to secure  
13 and safeguard the Ambassador.

14 So I don't want to head into this part of the  
15 conversation with you feeling that there's any effort here to  
16 be looking over your shoulder. We think, you know, from what  
17 we have heard some very smart, strategic, and tactical  
18 decisions were made, and we just wanted to, from your  
19 firsthand perspective, kind of have you walk us through the  
20 attack.

21 So if you wouldn't mind kind of just starting by  
22 letting -- telling us kind of where you were when you first  
23 became aware and roughly what time and then how it unfolded,  
24 and like I said, I will kind of converse through it with you,  
25 if that's okay.

1           A     Okay. That evening I was making my rounds. I had  
2     left the TOC. Agent [REDACTED] was manning the TOC. I left  
3     the TOC to make my rounds to kind of just walk around the  
4     perimeter and just kind of get a general sense of how things  
5     were going. And I got to Villa C, where the other agents  
6     were all sitting. They were all outside Villa C. And we had  
7     a -- we talked for a bit. And then I heard a scream or like  
8     a cry from the main gate.

9           And, of course, you know, that was unusual and it set  
10    all of our hair on end. We, I think, both -- we all had an  
11    understanding that something was off. Very shortly after  
12    that, we saw -- very shortly after that, the main gate had  
13    been breached. And so, after we heard this cry, we set into  
14    motion our react plan. [REDACTED] went into the villa to secure  
15    the villa. We acted according to our roles and  
16    responsibilities as we set forth in the react plan.

17          So [REDACTED] went in to lock down the Villa C. [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
18    went off to the cantina to equip themselves and to barricade  
19    in place. And then I made my way back to the TOC. It was at  
20    that point, since Villa C and the main gate are fairly close  
21    together, I had a view of the main gate area, and I could see  
22    people starting to stream in, attackers starting to stream  
23    in.

24          I was armed at that time. I decided not to open fire on  
25    them. I thought that it would be prudent to stay with the

1 plan and that, if I were to open fire on them, it probably --  
2 I felt that that wasn't a wise tactical decision. I would  
3 probably be overwhelmed pretty quickly. So I made my way  
4 back to the TOC. As I was headed back to the TOC, I called  
5 in on the radio and initiated our -- formally initiated our  
6 attack/react. I called three times, attack/react.

7 It was then the IDNS alarm system started going off. I  
8 went into the TOC. I barricaded it, barricaded the main  
9 door, and then barricaded the TOC door itself inside of the  
10 building. I donned my equipment. Agent [REDACTED] was  
11 already monitoring CCTV. He was getting into contact with  
12 Command Center. I used our dedicated radio to spin up our  
13 assets and the Annex to inform them that we were under  
14 attack. In addition, I attempted to get in contact with our  
15 QRF elements via our established communication lines, our  
16 cell phone lines. Unfortunately, I couldn't get into contact  
17 with them.

18 Q And why was that? Was it because the call didn't  
19 go through, or no one picked up?

20 A It was the -- no one picked up on that line. I  
21 don't know exactly what happened on their end. The cabana is  
22 fairly close to the main gate as well. And I don't know  
23 exactly what happened, where the breakdown was with our  
24 communications. In addition, I don't know how they reacted  
25 to the attack.



1 Q And so you were trying to reach out to the internal  
2 QRF?

3 A Right, into the internal QRF.

4 Q And then was any -- were either you or  
5 Mr. [REDACTED] trying to reach out to the QRF, February 17,  
6 external?

7 A Yes. And so because I couldn't reach our QRF  
8 element inside, I went back to our connection in the Annex to  
9 ask them to spin up the 17 February Brigade's assets to  
10 respond to the compound. The Annex also had a liaison with  
11 the militia and were able to contact them and to request  
12 assistance, and so I asked them to relay our message.

13 Q And do you know who in the Annex you were  
14 communicating with?

15 A I don't know. [REDACTED]  
16 [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED]

18 Q And did you -- did they say they would indeed try  
19 to make that outreach?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Okay. And, at this point in time, were you in  
22 communication with Mr. [REDACTED]?

23 A Yes, and I reached out via -- so I'm communicating  
24 with the Annex via a dedicated radio line. And, at the same  
25 time, I'm trying to maintain communications with [REDACTED] to see

1     what his status is, whether or not they're all locked down  
2     and secured as well as [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in the cantina.

3             Q     And how would that communication occur?

4             A     That occurred over our Motorola -- we had another  
5     dedicated frequency, radio frequency for our internal comms.

6             Q     And, at that point in time, were you in contact  
7     with [REDACTED]?

8             A     I did get in contact with [REDACTED]. He informed me  
9     that they were locked in, but as the attack progressed, our  
10    communications became erratic. He started to -- we all were  
11    under heavy fire by that time and so communications with him  
12    became harder and harder. In addition, it became hard to --  
13    it became difficult to communicate with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. They  
14    were on a separate radio frequency.

15            One of the issues leading up to the attack was our  
16    communication, our radios. So we had a number of Kenwood  
17    radios, which operated on different frequencies than our  
18    Motorola radios, and we had a very difficult time receiving  
19    spare batteries for our Motorola radios. And so, because we  
20    had these duplicate systems that didn't communicate with one  
21    another, it was difficult to communicate back and forth.

22            Q     So you -- were you -- during the time that you and  
23    Mr. [REDACTED] were in the TOC, were you primarily responsible  
24    for communicating with the Annex and with the on-compound  
25    communication?

1           A     Yes.

2           Q     And did you make any calls or communicate with the  
3     Command Center, either in Washington, D.C., or with Tripoli,  
4     the Embassy in Tripoli?

5           A     [REDACTED] was fielding those calls.

6           Q     Okay. So the division of that responsibility was  
7     that he was calling to Tripoli and to Washington  
8     potentially --

9           A     Right.

10          Q     -- and making those calls? And you were --

11          A     Right. I was managing our resources on the  
12     compound and in the Annex, trying to reach out with our  
13     immediate -- I was managing the immediate resources that we  
14     had as per our react plans.

15          Q     And you mentioned that at -- by this point, and to  
16     the best you can recall, kind of how long into the attacks --  
17     you said that there was heavy gunfire at this point. At what  
18     point did you notice that there was also -- buildings had  
19     been put on fire, and how did that come to your attention?

20          A     Well, as -- it seemed like a long time. Of course,  
21     I can't say exactly how much time elapsed between when we  
22     began our call for help and to when help finally arrived. I  
23     can't say certainly. But monitoring what was going on on the  
24     ground via the security cameras, I could see that Villa C --  
25     I could see flames starting to lick out of the windows and

1 black smoke started to pour out of the windows, and that's  
2 when I became aware that they were in very big trouble over  
3 there.

4 Q And, at that point in time, what was your  
5 understanding of kind of the Ambassador's location and  
6 safety? Like, when did you find out that there was a  
7 problem, or how did you find out?

8 A Well, according to our react plan, the management  
9 officer and the Ambassador, along with Agent [REDACTED] would  
10 hold in a safe room. This is kind of a storage closet that  
11 we had in the center of the safe haven, probably the safest  
12 place available to us on compound. And shortly after I  
13 noticed -- shortly after I saw that Villa C was on fire, I  
14 saw -- I tried to reach out to [REDACTED]. This is about the time  
15 that our communications are degrading. It's becoming a very  
16 chaotic environment. There's a lot of gunfire, of course.  
17 We're receiving gunfire in the TOC as well as he's receiving  
18 gunfire as well.

19 And, once I start to have trouble, I get -- I do  
20 eventually get in contact with [REDACTED] but the type of  
21 things -- my communications with him were very troubling  
22 because he seemed, from the quality of his voice and the  
23 things that he's telling me are troubling to me, like he's,  
24 you know, he's dealing with the effects of the smoke and the  
25 flame. And so, in addition, he is -- both he and [REDACTED], who

1 I'm communicating with on the radio, are very -- are asking  
2 me very insistently about when is our reaction force coming,  
3 when are the 17 February guys. By this time, I had already  
4 asked the Annex to spin up their reaction force and send them  
5 in, but they're, you know, they're taking time. So they're  
6 very insistently asking when this help is coming, and I don't  
7 have an answer for them.

8 And so, following this kind of troubling communication I  
9 have with [REDACTED], I make the decision that I'm going to go  
10 ahead and break from the plan. And I decide to leave the  
11 TOC, and my plan is to meet up with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] in the  
12 cantina and break them out. And then together we'll take one  
13 of the armored vehicles to Villa C and attempt to relieve  
14 [REDACTED] the Ambassador, and Smith.

15 I pick what I feel is an opportune moment. I scan with  
16 the cameras and see that in the immediate courtyard outside  
17 of the TOC building, I don't see any movement or any enemies,  
18 and so I decide that I'm going to go ahead and go out. I go  
19 out. [REDACTED] barricades the TOC behind me, and then I make my  
20 way tactically up to the cantina. And I clear my way to the  
21 cantina. I don't encounter any resistance.

22 And then I tell -- and then eventually I find the room  
23 that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] have barricaded them themselves in, and I  
24 gain entry to that room. I tell them, Let me in. I identify  
25 myself. And so we go in there. I inform them of the

1 situation, and now that we're face to face, it's much easier  
2 to communicate the facts of what's going on. And I say, you  
3 know, Let's go; we've got to go and help [REDACTED].

4 But [REDACTED] kind of calms me down a little bit. He says,  
5 you know, We need to wait; we don't know what the situation  
6 is over there yet. Because it's true; by that point, a  
7 number of our security cameras had been disabled or shot out  
8 by the attackers, and so we don't have a lot of information  
9 about what force is over on that side or where they are. And  
10 so I slow down a second.

11 And then maybe a minute or two after that, I'm not sure  
12 exactly how long after that, I get -- I finally -- I'm not  
13 able to establish contact with [REDACTED] throughout this entire  
14 time. I'm terribly worried. And so, eventually, while I'm  
15 in the room with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], I'm finally able to contact  
16 [REDACTED] again, and he related that he has escaped the safe  
17 haven through the escape hatch and made his way to the roof  
18 and that he's lost contact with Smith and Ambassador Stevens.

19 At the same time, I can hear in the background and he  
20 informs me that he's under fire; they're firing at him from  
21 the ground to the roof. And so I make my decision again, and  
22 I convince the guys to come. We're all going to go out and  
23 implement my plan. We get into the armored vehicle and make  
24 our way over to the other side of the compound.

25 At this time, as providence would have it, the GRS guys

1 are contacting the attackers outside the compound. And I'm  
2 not sure exactly if the February 17 response force is also  
3 arriving or if they arrive later, but nevertheless, the  
4 attackers are withdrawing under that contact and so, by the  
5 time we reach Villa C, they have withdrawn, and we are able  
6 to take up a position right outside the safe-haven exit  
7 escape hatch.

8 I call out to [REDACTED], and I bring him down from the roof,  
9 and he is visibly shaken. You know, he is suffering. I'm  
10 not a doctor, but he is suffering from some type of smoke  
11 inhalation, in my opinion. And so we put him into the -- we  
12 sit him down into the armored vehicle, and [REDACTED] stays behind  
13 with the armored vehicle in the driver's seat, in case we  
14 need to make a quick getaway. And then [REDACTED] and I link up  
15 with the members of the GRS, and we position ourselves  
16 outside of the safe-haven escape hatch, and then I doff my  
17 equipment. I go into the safe haven with the intention of  
18 recovering Smith and Stevens.

19 Immediately upon entering the safe haven, it becomes  
20 very clear to me that it would be a very -- that would be  
21 very difficult. The smoke is extremely thick and acrid.  
22 From what I understand now, that was a result of the  
23 accelerants used to start the fire. But open flame is not so  
24 much an issue; it's the volume and the toxic nature of the  
25 smoke that made it very difficult. Even immediately entering

1 the room, I became very disoriented.

2 But using my internal map, my memory of the layout of  
3 the safe-haven area, I make my way along the wall searching  
4 and feeling my way. I make my way into the safe-haven  
5 closet, the safe room, where, according to our plan, everyone  
6 would've been staged. And I don't find anybody in there. I  
7 go and make sure that -- I go and work my way around the wall  
8 to the gate, the locked gate of the safe haven itself. And  
9 I'm able to confirm that the gate is still locked. It was  
10 locked by padlock from the inside. So I can make the  
11 assumption that nobody has entered the safe haven and nobody  
12 has left. So that limits the search area.

13 So I continue to search. I just kind of follow along  
14 the walls, calling out to the Ambassador and Smith, and doing  
15 my best to feel around for them.

16 Q So, at this point, you have zero visual visibility  
17 and you're feeling along the walls?

18 A Uh-huh.

19 Q And so did that mean that you were just necessarily  
20 a little limited in the surface area you could cover in terms  
21 of --

22 A Right. Yeah. You're right; there was no  
23 visibility. So I was just trying to feel with my limbs, my  
24 hands and feet, and still maintain contact with the wall so  
25 that I wouldn't lose myself. But, nevertheless, I started to



1     feel very disoriented myself. I started to be worried that,  
2     you know, I was really craving oxygen by that point, and I  
3     eventually found myself in the bathroom. I broke a window  
4     out to try and ventilate the space and to get some fresh air  
5     for myself. And I cleared my head a little bit.

6             I was able to get lower to the ground, and then I worked  
7     my way back out the way that I had come. And it was at that  
8     point in the hallway that I came across the body of Sean  
9     Smith. He was unresponsive. So I grabbed him and dragged  
10    him back down the hallway to the safe-haven window and then  
11    handed him off to the people waiting outside. It was when we  
12    had him outside in the clear air that -- and we had a brief  
13    check of him, he had -- he was unresponsive, not breathing,  
14    no pulse, and so felt that at that point he was already  
15    expired.

16            And it was at that point that [REDACTED] went inside the  
17    building to search for Ambassador Stevens. Eventually, he  
18    came back. He was unsuccessful. And we took turns trading  
19    off going in and out and allowing one to rest while the other  
20    went in. Eventually, we came up with the idea to kind of tie  
21    each other off, like tether each other so that we would  
22    reduce the risk of one of us becoming a casualty and being  
23    lost.

24            But we were unable to find Ambassador Stevens. I was  
25    very -- at that point, I think I had decided that this was

1       probably a recovery mission. We were looking to recover his  
2       body. Some time had passed. I'm not sure exactly how much.  
3       But it became apparent -- and some of the 17 February Brigade  
4       members started to become very agitated, and one of them came  
5       to me and kind of indicated to me that we needed to leave.  
6       And I told him to get away. I was determined that we were  
7       going to find Ambassador Stevens' body.

8       But, shortly after that, one of the Annex guys explained  
9       to me that they had information that the attackers were  
10      massing for a counter assault, and it was at that point we  
11      made the decision to call off the search and evacuate the  
12      compound. I took one of the GRS members with me to recover  
13      the classified material that we could, our classified  
14      terminals and server. We loaded Smith's body into our  
15      vehicle, and we exited the compound under fire.

16      As we were turning left to go outside the compound, we  
17      could see at the end of that access road a lot of cars and  
18      lights and people milling about. I ascertained that that was  
19      probably a checkpoint or a blockade. And so we turned around  
20      and went the other way. It was at that point the attacking  
21      force kind of crossed paths with us, and then they opened  
22      fire on our vehicle, and we continued out.

23      We encountered another roadblock at the other end of the  
24      road, but we were able to punch our way through that. And  
25      then we made our way to the Annex and got inside the Annex.

1 The GRS followed shortly thereafter. From what I understand,  
2 they also evacuated under fire. And then, at that point,  
3 we -- the DS agents, we integrated ourselves into the Annex's  
4 security plan and took up positions on the roofs to prepare  
5 for a possible attack against the Annex.

6 Q Okay. So let me just ask you a couple of  
7 questions, and thank you for walking us through that. It's  
8 very helpful. During your search of the villa that the  
9 Ambassador and Mr. Smith, did you hear other people in the  
10 building at any point? Did you have the sense that anyone  
11 had entered the building other than your team or the other  
12 folks who were assisting in the efforts to find Mr. Smith or  
13 the Ambassador?

14 A No. When I was inside the villa, I didn't have the  
15 indication that there was anybody else in there. I couldn't  
16 hear any other sounds. I don't -- given the volume of smoke  
17 and the environment that I encountered in there, I would  
18 doubt that somebody could be in there for an extended amount  
19 of time, in any event.

20 Q And you had indicated that, as you were continuing  
21 the effort, you had been approached by a February 17 member.  
22 Do you recall, was this one of your internal compound people?  
23 Was it someone from the external -- what you understood to be  
24 the external assistance?

25 A It was a militia member that I had not seen before.

1 Q So it wasn't one of the --

2 A No, it wasn't one of our three QRF members.

3 Q So, at some point, the February 17 Brigade also  
4 came on compound and, at least in part, were assisting?

5 A Yes.

6 Mr. Evers. Can we go off the record?

7 Ms. Sawyer. Yes. Yes, let's.

8 [Discussion off the record.]

9 BY MS. SAWYER:

10 Q So I'm just going to ask a couple of follow-up  
11 questions. So going back to when you had originally reached  
12 out and made the contact and kind of put in place the react  
13 plan, was your first call to the February 17 on the internal  
14 compound, and when you couldn't reach them, you then said you  
15 reached out to the Annex. Were they aware -- had you  
16 discussed in advance the notion that they might be contacted  
17 to try to reach out to the February 17 folks? Had that been  
18 part of your drilling earlier in the week?

19 A I can't remember if we specifically arranged that  
20 as a contingency, if we were unable to reach the 17th Martyr  
21 Brigade ourselves and they would do that in our stead. That  
22 being said, I was aware of their capability to do so, and  
23 that's how it ended up that we were able to request their  
24 assistance.

25 Q And they were aware that February 17 was providing

1 both internal and the nearby kind of off-compound augmented  
2 in the case of the attacks. So they were aware of that --

3 A Yes.

4 Q -- part of the contingency plan?

5 A Yes.

6 Q And, at that point, when you made that first call  
7 to the Annex, did you ask both for them to send their Annex  
8 security team as well as trying to spin up the February 17  
9 folks?

10 A I can't remember the exact sequence of events. If  
11 memory serves me correctly, when I called them up on the  
12 radio to inform them that we were under attack, I also kind  
13 of set the chain of events into motion for them to start  
14 getting ready in the event that we would need them to send  
15 out a team.

16 Q And do you recall, did you then call again to say,  
17 you know, we really do need you to come as well as getting  
18 the February 17 Brigade here?

19 A Again, I can't remember exactly how the chain of  
20 events occurred in terms of like the calls that I made over  
21 the radio, although I do remember calling them multiple times  
22 to check on the progress of that aide and to check on the  
23 progress of not just the 17th February Brigade but of their  
24 Annex members to see where they were in terms of responding,  
25 in response to some of the other kind of inquiries from [REDACTED]

1        and [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].

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BY MS. SAWYER:

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Q And I'm sure the conversations were short, but did you get a sense of the explanation as to what was going on and what, if any, cause for delay was occurring?

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A No, I didn't. The TOC officer that I was in communications with said that we are on the way, we're going to be there. Again, I don't know exactly how much time elapsed. Perhaps the time was flowing much faster for me than it was for them. But I can't -- I can't speak as to what was going on there.

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Ms. Sawyer. Okay. Well, let's briefly go off the record.

14

[Discussion off the record.]

15

BY MS. JACKSON:

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Q We'll go back on the record. It's been a long day. Hopefully, we are in the final round here, and, hopefully, we'll be out of here shortly.

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Just backing up a little bit to before the attack, you stated that you were making rounds that night. So you were walking the perimeter of the compound?

22

23

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25

A Right. Not necessarily around the perimeter, but I was, as I usually did before turning in, I would kind of visit Villa C to make sure, just to see what was going on. Kind of go to the main gate just to make sure that they were

1       where they needed to be in terms of the local guard force  
2       people.

3           Q     And is that the main gate where the QRF resided  
4       too?

5           A     Yes.

6           Q     Okay. And was everybody in their place?

7           A     Well, I never made it to the main gate. The attack  
8       occurred. I was at Villa C conversing with the other agents  
9       who were outside of Villa C, and so I never made it to the  
10      front gate before the attack occurred.

11          Q     Prior to the attack occurred, did you hear anything  
12      on the outside, such as chanting or any type of sounds that  
13      would be a protest?

14          A     No, I never heard any sort of chanting or protest  
15      or anything.

16          Q     Would it be then an accurate description to  
17      describe the attack as sort of a stealth attack?

18          A     It was very sudden. As I had mentioned, the only  
19      warning that I had that something was amiss was that -- kind  
20      of that cry that I heard at the main gate. So it was very  
21      sudden.

22          Q     And the first attackers that you saw enter, were  
23      they armed?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     And what were they armed with?



1           A     At a glance, I identified AK-47s. Later on, when I  
2     was able to observe what was happening through the  
3     closed-circuit television system, I identified some more  
4     heavier weapons.

5           Q     Which included what?

6           A     RPGs, more AKs. I believe that there was a larger  
7     heavier machine gun, but I could be mistaken on that.

8           Q     And backing up even further, earlier in the day, on  
9     the 11th, do you recall that the Ambassador met with someone  
10    from the Turkish diplomatic corps?

11          A     Yes, I remember that.

12          Q     Do you remember when that individual left that  
13    evening?

14          A     I don't remember the exact time that he left, no.

15          Q     Okay. But you recall that he did leave that  
16    evening?

17          A     Yes.

18          Q     Did he come with security personnel?

19          A     I don't recall who accompanied him.

20          Q     Do you recall that he was accompanied?

21          A     No, I don't. I can't -- no, I can't remember with  
22    certainty if he had an entourage. I don't believe so. He  
23    entered the compound by himself, but I don't know if he had,  
24    like, a car outside waiting for him.

25          Q     Okay. So to your knowledge, neither you nor any of

1 the agents engaged in any type of conversation with any  
2 member of a protective detail he would have had if there was  
3 one?

4 A No, I didn't engage with any Turkish protective  
5 detail, no.

6 Q Okay, do you recall that the British dropped off  
7 some vehicles that evening, vehicles and weapons that  
8 evening?

9 A I don't remember them dropping off vehicles or  
10 weapons that evening. However, the British did store  
11 their -- some of their sensitive items, like weapons, and  
12 their vehicles on our compounds, and they had done so since  
13 they had decided to leave Benghazi.

14 Q Okay. But you don't recall them being there that  
15 evening?

16 A I can't remember if they were there that evening.

17 Q Okay. Do you recall that there were -- did you  
18 have any knowledge that there were protests in Cairo earlier  
19 in the day?

20 A No, I don't -- I don't remember hearing about  
21 protests in Cairo.

22 Q Do you have any recollection of any conversation  
23 you or the other agents had about the possibility of any  
24 protests elsewhere in the Middle East?

25 A No, I can't remember that.

1 Q Now, during the attack, you talked to us about a  
2 variety of communication methods that you used. Was it  
3 primarily radio?

4 A Yes. We primarily communicated via radio, both  
5 internally and with the Annex.

6 Q Do you know if those communications are picked up  
7 by any other part of the diplomatic security such as your  
8 Command Center, or are they broadcast live, in other words,  
9 or are they recorded in any way?

10 A No, our communications were all encrypted,  
11 conducted from a base station with a limited transmission  
12 range and from handheld radios with an even smaller range.  
13 So, no, they wouldn't have been -- the Command Center  
14 wouldn't have been able to pick up those transmissions.

15 Q What about any cell phone calls, did you or to your  
16 knowledge did any of your other team communicate via cell  
17 phone to either -- anyone on the outside, Tripoli, February  
18 17th, the Command Center?

19 A Agent [REDACTED] in the outset of the attack  
20 established communications with the Command Center. That was  
21 via cell phone.

22 Q And did that remain an open line or was it a series  
23 of calls back and forth?

24 A I don't know if he kept the line open or not.

25 Q During the time that you were in the TOC, do you

1 know if the line was kept open?

2 A Again, I was focused -- kind of focused in on my  
3 zone, so I'm not sure if he kept it open or not.

4 Q Do you recall in the background hearing him have  
5 multiple conversations with the Command Center?

6 A I remember him communicating with the Command  
7 Center, yes.

8 Q Other than February 17 leadership commanders, did  
9 you reach out to any other Libyans, the local Benghazi  
10 police, local military, anyone else to request support and  
11 assistance?

12 A I communicated with the -- I believe his title was  
13 the Minister of Foreign Affairs in Benghazi to request that  
14 he send police and military support to the special mission.

15 Q And did you reach him?

16 A I did reach him and I spoke with him. I can't  
17 remember if I was able to reach him on the Special Mission  
18 Compound. I do remember explicitly that I spoke with him.  
19 This would be while -- after we had already arrived at the  
20 Annex and I was on a position on the rooftop. I had a brief  
21 conversation with him over cell phone, informing him of what  
22 had happened, that the mission had been attacked, and telling  
23 him to send police and military forces to the special mission  
24 to secure it. In addition, I reached out to DCM [REDACTED] in  
25 Tripoli -- this was while I was -- after we arrived at the

1 Annex -- to inform him of the situation on the ground.

2 Q And did you reach him?

3 A I did.

4 Q And what, if anything, did you tell him?

5 A I told him that the mission had been attacked, that  
6 Ambassador Stevens was missing, and that we had evacuated to  
7 the Annex.

8 Q Did you make any statement regarding who the  
9 attackers were?

10 A No. No, I didn't.

11 Q Was there any indicia of who the attackers were?  
12 Were there any flags or chants that you recognized or others  
13 recognized that they told you?

14 A No, they were -- the attackers for the most part  
15 were plain clothed. Some of them had camouflaged clothing  
16 and other kind of military equipment, but there was no  
17 insignia or anything that I recognized.

18 Q Did you or the other agents communicate via text,  
19 or pin to pin, or anything like that during the attack that  
20 you recall?

21 A No.

22 Q What about when you were at the Annex?

23 A No, I didn't communicate via text while I was at  
24 the Annex.

25 Q All by radio?

1           A     Yeah. Primarily all of our communications was by  
2     radio or by cell phone.

3           Q     Okay.

4           Ms. Barrineau. Since you talked about Kenwood radios  
5     and Motorola radios and different frequencies, during the  
6     attack did all five of you have the capability to communicate  
7     or were you having to combat radios that couldn't talk?

8           Mr. [REDACTED]. Right. I was the only person -- the TOC was  
9     the only entity able to communicate with all of the parties  
10    at once. We didn't have enough Motorola radios or batteries,  
11    functioning batteries to equip [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] with Motorolas,  
12    which would have put us all on the same platform and the same  
13    frequency. So I had to issue them Kenwoods so that they  
14    could have some kind of radio communication capability.

15          Ms. Barrineau. Thanks.

16          BY MS. JACKSON:

17          Q     When you reached out to the Annex top officer, was  
18     your request that they come immediately?

19          A     I can't remember exactly if I requested they  
20     mobilize immediately or if I notified them and asked them to  
21     mobilize 17th February Brigade, I can't remember exactly.

22          Q     But you had multiple conversations back and forth  
23     with the Annex before you left?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     Okay. And it was to provide them updates as to the

1 status of the attack?

2 A Right. Well, first to notify them that the attack  
3 had occurred, and then to spin up our assets, in addition to  
4 try and check up on them to see where they're at as far as  
5 time on target for their detachment.

6 Q So in other words: Where are you guys? Get here.  
7 We need you.

8 A Yeah, we were becoming a little anxious.

9 Q At any point did you tell them that it was a  
10 protest that got out of hand?

11 A No, I never told them that there was a protest.

12 Q Was it your assessment that there was a protest?

13 A No.

14 Q Do you believe there was a protest?

15 A I don't.

16 Q At any time after you arrived at the Annex did any  
17 of the GRS personnel talk to you about any delay that they  
18 encountered in coming to your assistance?

19 A They did tell me that they had got into -- on their  
20 way into the special mission that they came into contact and  
21 they received fire and returned fire with the attackers.

22 Q Did any of them ever talk to you about a delay in  
23 leaving the Annex to go to the Special Mission Compound?

24 A No.

25 Q Subsequent to the attack, have you ever had a

1 conversation with any of the GRS individuals about their  
2 delay in arriving at the Special Mission Compound?

3 A No.

4 Q I'm about at the end, so let me just go back over  
5 my notes if I could for a moment, I mean, because I wrote  
6 cryptic notes and now I'm trying to figure out what they  
7 meant.

8 You had said earlier that you had equipment  
9 strategically placed throughout the compound. Do you recall  
10 that?

11 A Yes.

12 Q What equipment did you have strategically placed?

13 A Right. And so in the safe haven we stockpiled  
14 ammunition, food, water, medical supplies. In addition, on  
15 the roof of Villa C we stockpiled more food, ammunition, and  
16 water, in addition to smoke grenades, and did the same in the  
17 TOC as well.

18 Q Now, was Villa C next to the TOC or close to the  
19 TOC?

20 A Villa C --

21 Q Or was that in the other?

22 A Villa C, when I say Villa C, I'm referring to the  
23 building that were the primary sleeping quarters for the  
24 principal officer and the acting RS0.

25 Q And that was different than the building that you



1       slept in?

2           A     Yes. I slept in the TOC building and that was on  
3       the opposite side of the compound.

4           Q     Was this Villa C, was that where the Ambassador  
5       stayed?

6           A     Yes.

7           Q     Was this the building with the swimming pool?

8           A     Yes.

9           Q     Okay. Just want to make sure we are clear on which  
10      one. And then the other agents slept at the other building  
11      except for the one that was assigned to the Ambassador?

12          A     Right, they slept in the cantina, they were  
13      assigned to the cantina.

14          Q     The cantina building, okay.

15          Going back to, I believe it's Exhibit 9, the one about  
16      your meetings with the QRF, do you have that in front of you?

17          A     Yes.

18          Q     At the end of the first paragraph the last two  
19      sentences are, quote, "During the meeting, and with the PO's  
20      approval, we requested they allow us a waiver of this  
21      limitation for the duration of the ambassador's imminent  
22      visit to Benghazi. We were later told that this request was  
23      denied." You see that there?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     Okay. Did you ask for a waiver of their refusal to

1 support off-compound moves? Is that what is being referred  
2 to in this sentence?

3 A I don't remember who asked for that waiver, so  
4 I can't say if -- I can't remember if I asked it or --

5 Q Do you recall that the waiver was asked for, by you  
6 or someone else?

7 A No, I don't remember explicitly. I don't remember  
8 explicitly.

9 Q Okay. So you don't have a specific recollection of  
10 this happening?

11 A I remember the meeting, but, unfortunately, the  
12 details of the meeting and who said what have faded from my  
13 memory.

14 Q Okay. If you would flip to the second page of this  
15 exhibit, to the first full paragraph, the one that starts "in  
16 anticipation." No, I'm sorry, the following paragraph. And  
17 I'm going to just read this into the record, quote, "During  
18 the meeting with the brigade personnel, they indicated that  
19 they would continue to support internal defense of the  
20 Mission with the on-compound QRF and nearby off-compound  
21 response personnel at the current rate, and also noted that  
22 this included access to a previously unknown 21-person team  
23 to support off compound activities in a variety of dress  
24 (suit, military uniform, et cetera) and vehicles," end quote.  
25 What can you tell us about this previously unknown

1       21-person team, if you recall anything?

2           A     I don't remember -- I don't remember the details of  
3       this team.

4           Q     Okay. So you don't recall any of the particulars?

5           A     No.

6           Q     Given this change in the QRF not supporting  
7       off-compound moves, did that cause you or the other agents to  
8       reassess as to whether there should be yet another  
9       recommendation that the Ambassador not come?

10          A     I don't know if -- I don't remember if we made  
11       another recommendation based upon this -- the revelation that  
12       the -- our status with the QRF was changing.

13          Q     Up until he arrived, was it your assessment that  
14       you had insufficient security to support his visit?

15          A     My personal belief was that -- my personal belief  
16       was that the visit was -- allow me to reframe this. I  
17       personally did not want him to visit because I believed  
18       that -- I did not think that we had -- I wasn't satisfied  
19       personally with the security and the resources that we had  
20       available, so I would have liked for the visit to have been  
21       postponed or cancelled.

22          Q     Or added more security?

23          A     Or, yes, added more security.

24          Q     Would additional people have been sufficient for  
25       you to feel comfortable with having him there or were

1 physical security upgrades needed as well?

2 A Yes, some of the things that I would have liked to  
3 have seen were more personnel and physical security upgrades,  
4 yes.

5 Q And in your conversation with your other team  
6 members, was it your belief and understanding that they  
7 shared in your assessment?

8 A I can't speak to their opinions on the subject. We  
9 did speak about the types of things that we needed at the  
10 compound to really bring the security up to standards. But I  
11 would hesitate to speculate on what they believed.

12 Q I was just asking if they voiced any opinion during  
13 conversations with you?

14 A I can't remember specific conversations.

15 Q Following the attack, were you interviewed by the  
16 FBI?

17 A Yes.

18 Q And when and where did that occur?

19 A I was interviewed by the FBI during my -- [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. I'm unsure  
21 exactly when that took place.

22 Q Okay. Were there any Diplomatic Security agents  
23 present for the interview?

24 A Yes. Agent [REDACTED] was present during that  
25 interview.

1 Q Do you recall if he took notes?

2 A Yes, I think he did take notes.

3 Q Have you ever seen or reviewed any write-up of that  
4 meeting or interview after the fact?

5 A No, I have never viewed the briefing that he's  
6 since developed regarding the events in Benghazi.

7 Q So to your knowledge there was no report of  
8 interview generated from that meeting?

9 A I have never seen a report of interview.

10 Q What about an FBI report of interview, they call  
11 them FBI 302s, have you ever seen one?

12 A I have never -- no, I have never seen the 302 file  
13 myself.

14 Q And I believe you said earlier you were interviewed  
15 by the ARB or not, or you just have seen the report?

16 A I was.

17 Q And when and where did that take place?

18 A That was also while I was at Walter Reed, and,  
19 again, I can't remember the exact date it took place.

20 Q But obviously before the report came out?

21 A Correct.

22 Q Okay. And can you describe for us that interview,  
23 how many members of the ARB were there, was it only staff,  
24 was it recorded in any way?

25 A I can't remember if -- unfortunately, I can't

1 remember exactly who attended.

2 Q Was it one person, a handful of people?

3 A There were -- there was at least three people  
4 there. I'm not sure if they were members of the ARB or if  
5 they were staffers. I can't remember.

6 Q Okay. And approximately how long did it take --  
7 last?

8 A It lasted several hours.

9 Q Other than Agent [REDACTED] being present when you were  
10 interviewed by the ARB, have you had any other debriefings  
11 by any State --

12 Ms. Safai. I'm sorry, I don't think he -- he said that  
13 the FBI interview with Agent [REDACTED] was not at the ARB.

14 Ms. Jackson. Oh, I'm sorry. It's late in the day.

15 BY MS. JACKSON:

16 Q Other than the FBI interview in which Agent [REDACTED]  
17 was there, have you had any other debriefing or interview by  
18 any State Department officials?

19 A In preparation for these testimonies, I met with  
20 counsel, as well as counsel for State Department to prepare  
21 for these interviews.

22 Q And I certainly don't want you to go into any of  
23 the content of those meetings, but were they individual  
24 meetings or a joint meeting?

25 A They were joint meetings.

1 Q Did you review any documentation?

2 A Yes, we looked at some emails that had been  
3 submitted to the committee.

4 Q Okay. Any other preparation that you did before --  
5 any other review of documents, let me say?

6 A No.

7 Q Now, granted you were [REDACTED] not in the  
8 position, but were you aware that there was a request both  
9 from the ARB and from various congressional committees for  
10 documentation and information regarding the attacks?

11 A Yes, I followed that on the news.

12 Q Did you undertake any steps to direct anyone to  
13 find information that you would have been the author of or  
14 had your name on, such as the emails we've seen here today?

15 A No. During the period I guess where the body of  
16 the controversy surrounding Benghazi came up, I was, as you  
17 noted, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED]. It was very challenging  
19 time for myself and for my family. So I was mainly focused  
20 [REDACTED] and tried to -- aside from what I saw on the  
21 news -- tried to stay away from that.

22 Q Okay. Agent [REDACTED], I think we are about at the end  
23 of our questions. I do have just a couple of routine  
24 follow-up questions, concluding questions. And basically as  
25 you sit here at the end of this long day and sit back and

1 reflect on the questions that have been asked, the answers  
2 that you've given, is there any question that you -- or  
3 answer that you gave that you think requires further  
4 elaboration or clarification, anything along those lines?

5 A I can't think of any right now.

6 Q Okay. Is there any area that you thought we would  
7 inquire about that we have not?

8 A No.

9 Q So in other words, you think we were thorough?

10 A Well, I came with an open mind, to just be  
11 available to yourself and to other members of the committee.

12 Q I join with my colleague Heather Sawyer in echoing  
13 her sentiments that you and your fellow DS agents acted  
14 admirably during the attack, and we thank you for that.  
15 That's all the questions I have.

16 BY MS. SAWYER:

17 Q Mr. [REDACTED], I just have a couple of quick follow-up,  
18 and then we have some other questions for you.

19 When you were talking with my colleague just moments ago  
20 there was a conversation, again, about the contract dispute  
21 with February 17th about off-compound moves. And I think she  
22 asked you if that had led to yet another recommendation that  
23 the Ambassador not make his trip.

24 You can probably understand the seriousness with which  
25 congressional committees take the notion of recommendations



1       being made and perhaps ignore or refused. So I just want to  
2       make the record perfectly clear as to when you answered that  
3       question and talked about a recommendation being made, was  
4       there a recommendation made by anyone in Benghazi to Tripoli  
5       that the Ambassador not come to Benghazi, to your knowledge?

6           A     I can't remember explicitly seeing or reading a  
7       recommendation that the Ambassador not come to Benghazi, no.

8           Q     Were you in any conversations with Tripoli where  
9       that issue was raised and it was even suggested that he not  
10      come?

11          A     I wasn't a party to any such conversations with  
12      Tripoli, no.

13          Q     Now, some of the personnel from the Annex have been  
14      fairly public about their experience and have written a book.  
15      Were you ever interviewed as part of that book?

16          A     No.

17          Q     Earlier, when the ranking member was here, he  
18      discussed with you concerns that you had about being  
19      identified publicly. I don't know if you have read the book,  
20      but you are identified in the book. Was that ever discussed  
21      with you before that book was published?

22          A     No.

23          Q     Did you ever give your permission to be identified  
24      by name in the book?

25          A     No, and I haven't gotten any checks either. So I'm

1       pretty salty about that.

2           Q     And my understanding is there might be a movie  
3       deal, perhaps you can get into that.

4           And then some of the other questions you were asked had  
5       to do with some of the other times that you have been asked  
6       about the attacks and in particular whether notes were taken  
7       or those were recorded. From your perspective, do you think  
8       there is anything that we could learn from those notes that  
9       we have not learned from you today?

10          A     I really can't say. I don't know if -- what the  
11       contents of those notes would be, so I can't venture to guess  
12       whether or not they would be of any use.

13          Q     Is there anything -- I think this echoes my  
14       colleague's question -- that you would just like to add to  
15       our base of knowledge about your experience in Benghazi?

16          A     I don't think that I have anything beyond what's  
17       already been said and recorded to add to the record of what  
18       happened in Benghazi, no.

19          Q     I'm going to run through -- my colleague Peter is  
20       going to have me do it -- as was mentioned earlier, there has  
21       been an investigation by the Accountability Review Board and  
22       this is now the eighth congressional investigation. You were  
23       asked to come because you do have firsthand knowledge about  
24       some of the events that occurred that night and before that  
25       night.

1           There has obviously been a lot of speculation about the  
2   attacks as well. But it is our sincere hope that we will  
3   uncover the facts and put to bed a lot of the speculation.  
4   So I'm going to ask you a series of questions based on a  
5   number of allegations that have come up. Some of these may  
6   be beyond your firsthand knowledge, but I'm just going to run  
7   through them and ask if you have any evidence that would  
8   support any of them.

9           It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton  
10   intentionally blocked military action on the night of the  
11   attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote,  
12   "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end  
13   quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not  
14   sending more assets to help in Benghazi.

15          Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton  
16   ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down"  
17   on the night of the attacks?

18          A    No.

19          Q    Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State  
20   Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense  
21   Panetta on the night of the attacks?

22          A    No.

23          Q    It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
24   personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to  
25   Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim

1 and gave it four Pinocchios, its highest award for false  
2 claims, yet the claims have continued to persist.

3 Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
4 personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security  
5 resources to Libya?

6 A No.

7 Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was  
8 personally involved in providing specific instruction on  
9 day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

10 A No.

11 Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
12 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
13 by General Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner  
14 support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011.

15 Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
16 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
17 by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for  
18 military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

19 A No.

20 Q It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in  
21 Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to  
22 other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House  
23 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote,  
24 "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to  
25 Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support

1 for this allegation," end quote.

2 Do you have any evidence to contradict the House  
3 Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the  
4 CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

5 A No.

6 Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities  
7 in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers  
8 from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

9 A No.

10 Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily  
11 delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special  
12 Mission Compound, and there have been a number of allegations  
13 about the cause of and the appropriateness of that delay.

14 The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan  
15 report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote,  
16 "stand down," but that instead there were tactical  
17 disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

18 Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House  
19 Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand down  
20 order to CIA personnel?

21 A No.

22 Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the  
23 decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right  
24 decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or  
25 improper reason behind the temporary delay of CIA security

1 personnel who departed the Annex to ~~assist the Special~~  
2 Mission Compound?

3 A No.

4 Q A concern has raised by one individual that in  
5 the course of producing documents to the Accountability  
6 Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or  
7 scrubbed out of that production.

8 Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
9 Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the  
10 materials that were provided to the ARB?

11 A No.

12 Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
13 Department directed anyone else at the State Department to  
14 remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that  
15 were provided to the ARB?

16 A No.

17 Q Let me just ask these questions for documents  
18 provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone  
19 at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging  
20 documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

21 A No.

22 Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director  
23 Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the  
24 Benghazi attack for political reasons, that he then  
25 misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the

1 CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance  
2 with the highest standards of objectivity and  
3 nonpartisanship," end quote.

4 Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike  
5 Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to  
6 Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

7 A No.

8 Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director  
9 Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for  
10 political reasons?

11 A No.

12 Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made  
13 a, quote, "intentional misrepresentation" when she spoke on  
14 the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks.

15 Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice  
16 intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks  
17 on the Sunday talk shows?

18 A No.

19 Q It has been alleged that the President of the  
20 United States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in  
21 Chief," end quote, on the night of the attacks and that he  
22 was, quote, "missing in action," end quote.

23 Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that  
24 the President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or  
25 missing in action on the night of attacks?

1           A     No.

2           Q     It has been alleged that a team of four military  
3     personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who  
4     were considering flying on a second plane to Benghazi were  
5     ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning  
6     to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that  
7     those four individuals were instead ordered, quote, "to  
8     remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical  
9     assistance in their current location." A Republican staff  
10    report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found  
11    that, quote, "There was no stand down order issued to U.S.  
12    military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in  
13    Benghazi," end quote.

14           Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of  
15    the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "There was no  
16    stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli  
17    who sought to join the fight in Benghazi"?

18           A     No.

19           Q     And then finally, it has been alleged that the  
20    military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack  
21    that would have saved lives. Former Republican Congressman  
22    Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed  
23    Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after  
24    which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops where, how  
25    quickly the thing all happened and how quickly it dissipated,



1 we probably couldn't have done more than we did," end quote.

2 Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman  
3 McKeon's conclusion?

4 A No.

5 Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had  
6 military assets available to them on the night of the attacks  
7 that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership  
8 intentionally decided not to deploy?

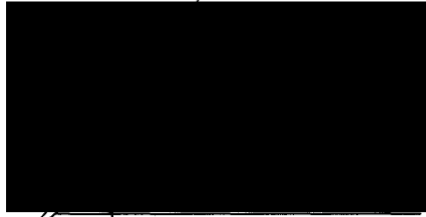
9 A No.

10 Ms. Sawyer. I think that concludes the interview. So  
11 we can go off the record.

12 [Whereupon, at 5:43 p.m., the interview was concluded.]  
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## Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing 23 pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.



Witness Name

March 23, 2016

Date

Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing 169 pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

Witness Name

Date \_\_\_\_\_

4/26/2016

## EXHIBIT 1

C05396696

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 8/16/2012 5:47:53 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] (Tripoli TDY) [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Physical security request memo  
**Attachments:** TOC Door Memo-[REDACTED]08-14-12(signed).pdf

Greetings from Benghazi,

I'm a new ARSO here and am trying to push forward with some critical improvements to the physical security of the Mission. In particular, the attached memo illuminates some problems we have with the door to the TOC. I've been in contact with [REDACTED] our landlord, to discuss changing the existing door with a heavier one. He seemed set on taking the matter up with Tripoli before allowing me to go forward. He said he would be in contact with your offices.

I haven't yet pursued any price quotes for replacing the door. I thought I would reach out first and provide some background on the issue. However, in my estimation, it would be relatively inexpensive to fix. We can purchase a metal or solid-core wood door locally and install it with reinforced hinges. This may run slightly beyond our \$500 petty cash limit. Quite simply, the TOC door we have now is a hollow-core wood door; It needs to be upgraded to something more substantial. Additionally, my understanding is that we need to obtain the LL's approval to modify the door.

I'm happy to work with you on this and other matters, please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns

[REDACTED]  
ARSO Benghazi

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## EXHIBIT 2

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C05392990

## Mission Libya Tripwires – Updated as of August 13 2012

## Events triggering a heightened security posture:

- Scattered protests regarding the process to draft the Libyan Constitution.
- Significant delays in the formulation of the Constitution, resulting in public protests.
- Significant delays in the new congress' ability to appoint a new cabinet, resulting in widespread, public protests and a halt in government decision-making or services.
- A sustained pattern of GOL public statements and/or sermons, media content, demonstrations that are anti-American or anti-western in nature.
- Embassy personnel and other members of the expatriate community report strains in relations with members of the local community.
- Confirmed reports of an increased role in Libya of groups with links to Al-Qaeda.
- Sustained increase in the number of checkpoints in/around major urban areas, particularly in daylight hours.
- Armed attacks on political candidates or election commission offices.
- An increase in the number and credibility of threats by terrorist groups or former regime loyalists.
- Abrupt replacement, detention or arrest of key Libyan government officials.
- Credible, specific and non-counterable information of a planned attack against U.S. interests.
- Attack on U.S. facilities or personnel, resulting in no injuries.
- Attack on a western diplomatic facility in Tripoli or Benghazi.

## Measures to Consider:

- Hold an EAC to review post's security posture.
- Review/update warden system and F-77 report.
- Review and update drawdown lists.
- Send a warden message regarding particular incidents/overall security trends; consider changes to the Travel Warning.
- Limit trips outside major urban areas.
- Limit the number of TDY personnel at post.
- Return to use of armed close protection for all USDH staff.
- Develop and test alternate communications systems.
- Consider reductions in the number of staff at post through the use of R&R's.
- Reduce or vary operating hours for USG facilities.
- Update post personnel information for quick preparation of travel orders in the event of a drawdown.
- Hold an evacuation planning session for all personnel at post.
- Hold an OSAC meeting, and town hall meeting with the private American citizen community.
- Meet with local authorities to seek increased host government protection of USG facilities.
- Ensure Embassy residences and office space have sufficient provisions to shelter-in-place if needed.
- Update contact information for all personnel at post; share this information with the Department.
- Maintain an accurate, daily list of all personnel present at post.

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C05392990

**Events triggering consideration of authorized departure:**

- Demonstrations and incidents of social unrest, including protests related to the election, become large-scale and widespread, with the greater likelihood of violence.
- Sustained fighting among various militias, tribes or factions, particularly in major urban areas.
- Use of armed force by separatist elements against the central government.
- A dramatic increase in violent crime, including looting and home invasions.
- Small-scale attacks by Qadhafi loyalists, militias, or terrorist elements in or around Tripoli, Benghazi, and major urban areas.
- Major international carriers halt service to Libya.
- Sustained disruption of airport services, inability to land USG flights at Tripoli International or Mitiga Airports.
- Sustained disruption of overland evacuation routes to Tunisia and Egypt.
- Severe shortages of fuel, food and/or a disruption of city water supplies (or any combination of these three factors) due to conflict or sabotage.
- Attempted violent overthrow of the government.
- Assassination of a leading political figure.
- Attack on U.S. facilities or personnel, resulting in injuries.
- Inability or unwillingness of central government/security forces to respond to Embassy emergencies or security needs.

**Measures to consider:**

All measures listed in conjunction with a heightened security posture, plus:

- Hold an EAC to consider authorized departure
- Cancel all but mission-essential TDY visits
- Temporarily suspend non-emergency public services
- Cancel all travel outside of Tripoli and Benghazi
- Limit movements to mission-essential work only
- Meet with USG funded implementing partners to review their security posture, encourage drawdown of their staff if appropriate (particularly if Embassy is drawing down via authorized departure status)
- Establish 24-hour command post at the Embassy to monitor and report on the ongoing situation, including Consular, security, public diplomacy and USAID elements as appropriate.
- Set up a regular reporting schedule with Washington (either via telephone or written reports) and ensure that headquarters officials from all agencies respect that reporting timeline.
- Establish a duty schedule to ensure staff have adequate rest time.
- Prepare evacuation paperwork.
- Convene a conference call with NEA/EX, Crisis Management, Consular Affairs, appropriate military authorities to consider contingency measures for the evacuation of private American citizens.
- Consult friendly embassies on possible evacuation plans.
- Request additional Diplomatic Security TDY personnel.
- Review and reduce classified holdings.

**Events triggering consideration of ordered departure:**

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C05392990

- Armed coup and/or violent overthrow of the government.
- Significant terrorist attack, resulting in mass casualties.
- Outbreak of nationwide hostilities among factions, including hostilities focused on the results of the election or a declaration of secession by one of Libya's three main regions.
- Large-scale, organized attacks by Qadhafi loyalists.
- Hostage-taking of Americans or westerners becomes prevalent in Libya.
- Natural disaster with extensive loss of life, habitable property and collapse of key public infrastructure.
- Inability or unwillingness of central government /security services or militias aligned with the central government to maintain public order or respond to threats/disturbances posed by individual militias.
- Response by Libyan security forces to acts of violence, threats of violence, or active surveillance against American or western interests indicates a denial of the seriousness of the threat.
- Election of a government that is hostile to the United States and supports the use of violence against U.S. interests.
- Aggressive attacks against oil infrastructure, resulting in significant curtailment of oil production.

*Measures to consider:*

All measures listed in conjunction with authorized departure, plus:

- Hold an EAC to consider ordered departure
- Cancel all but emergency support TDY visits.
- Activate arrangements for USG-managed evacuation (commercial, charter or military) of private Amcit community, if necessary.
- Meet with USG funded implementing partners to review their security posture, ensuring drawdown of their staff.
- Review contingency planning for military-assisted Noncombatant Evacuation Operation (NEO) and consult with the Department regarding coordination with U.S. military on evacuation assistance.
- Bring in consular fly-away team and DS Security Support Team.
- For a terrorist attack against U.S. persons or interests (to include hostage-taking), request deployment of a Foreign Emergency Support Team (FEST).
- Develop a list of minimal, emergency staffing should further staff draw-downs be required beyond the initial ordered departure
- Develop and approve tripwires for suspension of operations.

**Consideration of "suspended operations":**

- US Mission Benghazi is staffed solely with mission critical personnel and as such cannot draw down further while remaining operational. Therefore, Post has added a *suspended operations* category to the tripwire matrix. Under this scenario, Post would stop all movement outside the mission. Meetings with host nation could continue but must be conducted at the mission only.

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## EXHIBIT 3

C05397187

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]@gmail.com  
**Subject:** FW: Any info on this?  
**Date:** Tuesday, September 04, 2012 11:25:00 AM

---

**From:** Stevens, John C  
**Sent:** Monday, August 27, 2012 12:29 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] Hicks, Gregory N; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Any info on this?

[REDACTED] - Thanks for flagging. Definitely worth pulsing the security/political community, [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED] Pres Magariaf told [REDACTED] and me yesterday that he expected trouble in the coming days. I have also heard from other Libyan contacts vague reports about armed men gathering somewhere in central/south Libya, supported by regime loyalists abroad. There was also the recent report about "100 tanks" discovered in Tarhuna, supposedly under the control of pro-Qadhafi people.

SBU  
 This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 27, 2012 12:25 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] Hicks, Gregory N; [REDACTED] (tripoli temp); [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Stevens, John C  
**Subject:** Any info on this?

There are two people who have heard the same thing regarding elements gathering in Wadi Bani Walid. Has anyone heard anything similar?

I attached what they sent me [REDACTED]

Contact 1

I was taking to a reliable source last night who says that there are elements gathering in the place mentioned above (Wadi Bani Walid).

Coming soon is the 1<sup>st</sup> September a significant date for the former regime elements.

Contact 2 (response to Contact 1)



C05397187

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This is interesting I received a call from a contact in Misrata this morning telling me the same information, contacts of mine have also been mentioning 'September 1<sup>st</sup> and the way to Tripoli' there is a lot brewing under the surface at the moment that I feel will only get worse. If I find out anything else I'll pass it on.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Have you heard anything over there?

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Special Agent, Diplomatic Security Service  
Regional Security Officer  
US Embassy, Tripoli  
Mobile [REDACTED]

## EXHIBIT 4

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Flash/Benghazi-02SEPT12/IED Explosion-1330hrs  
**Date:** Sunday, September 02, 2012 10:39:34 AM  
**Attachments:** IED explosion Jamal Abdun Nassir Street-02SEPT12.docx

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-----Original Message-----

**From:** [REDACTED] [mailto:\_\_\_\_@isa.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 02, 2012 4:35 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Flash/Benghazi-02SEPT12/IED Explosion-1330hrs

FYI

This afternoon at approx 1330hrs an IED planted in a white Toyota Camry parked along Jamal Abdun Nasir Street a couple of blocks behind Tibesty Hotel exploded targeting Brigadier Jumaa Kadeki formerly with Qaddafi Interior Security who is said to be alive but injured and Abdul Baset Hufalitha who is reportedly dead. See attached captions of damaged vehicle.

Regards and Stay safe,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
FSCO  
Benghazi & East Libya  
Mob:- [REDACTED]

## EXHIBIT 5

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fw: Daily Threat Update and News Summary as at 3 September 2012.  
**Date:** Monday, September 03, 2012 2:36:08 AM  
**Attachments:** Daily Security and Libyan News Update 3 September 2012.docx

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED]@crosstech.cc]  
**Sent:** Monday, September 03, 2012 01:52 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]@gmail.com>; [REDACTED]@gmail.com>; [REDACTED]@staff.crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@staff.crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@staff.fsd.ch>; [REDACTED]@staff.crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@yahoo.com>; [REDACTED]@crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@staff.crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@staff.crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@gmail.com>; [REDACTED]@staff.crosstech.cc>; Controlled Dems  
 [REDACTED]@controlled-demolition.com>; [REDACTED]@crosstech.cc>; [REDACTED]@yahoo.com>; [REDACTED]@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]TRIPOLI RSO; Tripoli Ops [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@staff.fsd.ch>; [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@un.org>; [REDACTED]@initiativevtraininggroup.com>; [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@fco.gov.uk>; [REDACTED]@sky.com>; [REDACTED]@luxsci.com  
 [REDACTED]@minbuza.nl>; [REDACTED]@salamancarm.com>; [REDACTED]@bluemountaingroup.co.uk>  
**Subject:** Daily Threat Update and News Summary as at 3 September 2012.

Good day all,

indications are that the assassinations of former Gaddafi regime personnel has re-started with the car bomb yesterday. This reminds us all that the capability exists, they know how to use it and that we must all be careful.

Keeping our profile low and our journeys to an absolute minimum are one major factor is reducing our risk.

Regards

[REDACTED]

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## EXHIBIT 6

C05262795

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2 OF 3

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Page 1 of 2

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: 9/4/2012 5:26:13 AM  
 To: SMART Core  
 Subject: Benghazi Weekly Report - September 4, 2012

UNCLASSIFIED

SBU



MRN: 12 TRIPOLI 1078  
 Date/DTG: Sep 04, 2012 / 040925Z SEP 12  
 From: AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
 Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE  
 E.O.: 13526  
 TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PHUM, KDEM, KISL, LY  
 Captions: SENSITIVE, SIPDIS  
 Subject: Benghazi Weekly Report - September 4, 2012

1. (SBU) Summary. This is Benghazi's weekly round-up of political, economic, and social issues not included in previous reporting.
2. (SBU) September 1 "Maximum Alert" : Public comments from senior Interior Ministry officials August 29 regarding the immediate and indefinite introduction of a "state of maximum alert" in Benghazi took many here by surprise. The morning rush hour passed without event, but security forces have maintained a visible presence in the city throughout the week, including staffing checkpoints that had long been idle. They have been out in force at the airport since August 30, and the police have established a 24/7 police presence at the Mission in response to our long-standing request. Since the alert, authorities here are tracking numerous security incidents, including a car bombing in downtown Benghazi allegedly targeting former Interior Ministry officers and a thwarted attack on the Benghazi branch of the Central Bank.
3. (SBU) Coordination is still an open question. An hour-long gun battle broke out between local police and militia forces August 28 following the arrest of a militia member for allegedly stealing weapons, demonstrating the very delicate dynamic among the city's official and unofficial security forces. The rationale for the alert, given as the threat from former regime elements, also strikes many Benghazi natives as odd. Qadhafi loyalists have been targets more than threats here of late, and have kept a very low profile in the face of strong Revolutionary and Islamist sentiment. Although some point to the anniversary of Qadhafi's revolution September 1 as a potential rallying point for former regime elements, to the more conspiratorially-minded of Benghazi's citizens, the Ministry's announcement appears to be an effort to distract attention from Tripoli's own highly-publicized difficulties keeping the peace in the West.
4. (SBU) Port Manager Outlines Expansion Project: Benghazi Port Manager [REDACTED] told PO August 28 that the port is functioning at pre-Revolutionary levels but could expand capacity dramatically through an ambitious two-year construction project. The plan calls for dredging down to a depth of 18 meters to accommodate up to 10 container ships simultaneously, and converting the original piers to a port for tourist vessels and other pleasure craft. [REDACTED] says that current capacity allows the port to handle 3 container ships simultaneously, causing a 7-10 day wait as ships queue up in the Mediterranean or even transfer their cargos to smaller vessels in Malta for delivery here. He commented confidently that "the money is there" for the port expansion, but was less definitive regarding his chain of command, commenting

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Page 1 of 2

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C05262795

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only that the port reported to "the government." He went out of his way to predict that more goods from the U.S. would begin to enter the port "now that you have finally started issuing visas."

5. (SBU) **UK Presence:** A planned visit by the UK Embassy's DCM was postponed due to transportation problems, and has been rescheduled to September 5. The UK's local office will remain closed but we understand that plans are underway to assess reopening on or about the beginning of October.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Drafted By: \_\_\_\_\_

Cleared By: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Released By: \_\_\_\_\_

Info:

DEPT OF AGRICULTURE USD FAS WASHINGTON DC RUEHRCROUTINE;  
 DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DCROUTINE;  
 DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DCROUTINE; DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC  
 ROUTINE; DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DCROUTINE;  
 DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DCROUTINE; CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE  
 ROUTINE; FBI WASHINGTON DCROUTINE; CIA WASHINGTON DCROUTINE;  
 ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVEROUTINE; AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVEROUTINE

Action Post: \_\_\_\_\_

Dissemination Rule:

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 Page 2 of 2

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## EXHIBIT 7

C05394394

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Fw: Daily Threat Update and News Summary as at 5 September 2012.  
**Date:** Wednesday, September 05, 2012 2:07:30 AM  
**Attachments:** [Daily Security and Libyan News Update 5 September 2012.docx](#)

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----- Original Message -----

**From:** [REDACTED] [mailto: [REDACTED]@crosstech.cc]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, September 05, 2012 02:03 AM  
**To:**

**Cc:** [REDACTED]; TRIPOLI RSO;

**Subject:** Daily Threat Update and News Summary as at 5 September 2012.

Good day all,

once again a noisy night in Benghazi with numerous explosions throughout the night, the latest at 0410 this morning.

Reports are also emerging of yet another assassination attempt although indications are that this one failed.

It is clear that both criminal and insurgent elements are gaining confidence once again so we must be increasingly vigilant as we go about our essential business.

Regards

## EXHIBIT 8

U.S. Department of State - Doc# C05411351 - Produced to the House of Representatives Select Committee on Benghazi per agreement on redactions/safeguarding sensitive information. No waiver of rights under the Freedom of Information Act.

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Prep  
Date: Sunday, September 09, 2012 7:38:07 AM

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Gents,

Things we need to do:

- Develop call signs
- Confirm Annex Support
- Confirm Annex Security Brief
- Prep. Security Brief/REACT Plan
- Day and Night Drill
- Plan positions
- Sleeping Locations
- Ensure we have enough visitor badges
- Extra QRF rovers for next week?
- LGF announces visitors arrival

Edit as you need and send it back out to us so we can be organized with what we need to do.

[REDACTED]

## EXHIBIT 9

C05393607 [REDACTED] HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]  
 From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Monday, September 10, 2012 10:51 AM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: FW: Benghazi QRF agreement

Importance: High

[REDACTED]  
 Thanks for the info.  
 [REDACTED]

Any suggestions before anyone writes up an MOA. It is possible we will be there past Dec. I want to be sure we don't get stuck with something we will have trouble getting out of if we need to.

Thanks  
 [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Sunday, September 09, 2012 11:31 PM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Cc: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: Benghazi QRF agreement  
 Importance: High  
 [REDACTED]

Acting PO, acting RSO, and TDY A/RSOs met with two 17 February Brigade outreach personnel and the QRF commander today about a change in policy the previous day issued by the Captain of their Diplomatic Mission Protection Unit that disallows our (and apparently other diplomatic missions in Benghazi with 17 February QRFs) QRF from supporting off compound movements. As I wrote in my previous e-mail, this restriction impacts our ability to move throughout the city and easily gain access to the VIP area of the airport as the QRF served off compound as mobile security, drivers, and expeditors. These things can still be accomplished in the QRF's absence through our driver/expeditor, but it will require substantially more effort for him and lead time for us. During the meeting, and with PO's approval, we requested they allow us a waiver of this limitation for the duration of the Ambassador's imminent visit to Benghazi. We were later told this request was denied.

As there was apparently never any signed formal agreement with the 17 February Brigade for the QRF, we've only had an oral agreement with them since we began using their QRF last year. Additionally, according to 17 February, this oral agreement only included internal defense, and due to the fact that the brigade personnel with whom the original agreement was reached are no longer in place, they would like to establish a new written agreement (MOA) with us. Since they felt that the original agreement with them did not include any off-compound moves, they stated that if we want their support for them, they requested we increase their current 35LYD/day (appx. 1050LYD/month) to spend for their personnel assigned to the Mission. To support this request for additional money for an activity they already perform, they cited the poor job market in Libya and the need for their personnel to provide for themselves. When asked for a specific amount, they advised we should



C05393607

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determine the value ourselves, but their preference was for a hourly rate for off-compound moves. They also inquired about an additional stipend for food – which we advised was already included in their current stipend per existing documentation at the Mission. It should be noted that the current agreement also provides on-compound Mission housing for the QRF and use of the full facilities and utilities (pool, gym, electricity, water, etc.). It has also recently come to our attention that the food service staff also feeds them on occasion, although as previously noted, their current stipend includes money for food.

In anticipation of their request for a working towards a formal, signed agreement, TDY A/RSO [REDACTED] reworked the existing 17 February QRF work requirements developed by previous RSO staff at Post to develop a draft MOA. (We will provide a softcopy in a follow-up e-mail.) We reviewed the English version of the MOA with the visiting brigade personnel with the QRF commander serving as translator. This draft MOA appeared to be well-received. Upon completion of the meeting we provided an Arabic translation hardcopy of the document to them.

During the meeting the brigade personnel, they indicated they would to continue to support internal defense of the Mission with the on-compound QRF and near-by off-compound response personnel at the current rate, and also noted this included access to a previously unknown 21-person team to support off compound activities in a variety of dress (suit, military uniform, etc.) and vehicles. Details on availability, capability, or professionalism of this group was not provided. We are following up with the brigade to learn more about this unit. The brigade representatives also made a request for this 21-person unit to receive training from the RSO shop. We advised we would relay this request.

The meeting ended on good terms. We agreed to continue to work toward a signed agreement, and meet again in the short-term.

Recommended options in no order:

- Following a signed MOA, maintain our present QRF relationship and stipend amount with the understanding that they will not support off-compound moves. The already in-process hiring of an additional Mission motor pool driver will ease this transition, and provide some of the off-compound functions previously supported by the QRF.
- Work to replace the 17 February QRF with a direct-hire FSN squad under a similar financial and housing arrangement. Under this arrangement, we may lose the brigade's off-compound response force, but it may be possible to continue this off-site component of the relationship with the correct incentive.
- Offer to raise the QRF stipend 5-10LYD/day with the agreement they would support all off-compound moves.
- Offer to provide 5-10LYD flat rate "bonus" to specific QRF personnel for supporting an unlimited number of off-compound moves per day. This would require specific tracking of which QRF member supported what off-compound moves each day.
- Although not recommended, Post could meet the brigade's request for hourly payment above the current stipend for support performed off-compound.
- Post could offer to let the QRF personnel maintain their current stipend rate while allowing them to eat the contracted food service meals in the post Cantina at no cost to them in exchange for the agreement to support off-compound moves.

Cheers,

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Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
 Diplomatic Security Service  
 US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

@state.gov

Libyan mobile: [REDACTED]

Libyan mobile from the US: [REDACTED]

Benghazi desk VOIP from the US: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 09, 2012 10:44 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for the heads up. During your meetings, definitely push back with the 17 Feb Commanders stressing the good working relationship and operational need for the Mission to continue off compound moves with the QRF members.

OPO would support your hiring of the QRF members on a PSA bases. Unfortunately this takes time and doesn't help with your immediate situation. In the past, and under exigent circumstances similar to yours, RSO's have brought on employees using a purchase order to start them immediately while you work to normalize their employment under the standard PSA process. Obviously, FMO and HR would have to be partners in this process.

Good luck and let us know how the meetings go.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 9:29 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

ALCON,

We were just notified by our 17 February Brigade QRF this evening that they were told by their leadership to no longer support off-compound moves, and only provide internal defense. We believe this is part of the power struggle between the government and brigades over security functions in Benghazi.

This impacts our ability to move throughout the city and gain access to the VIP area of the airport as the QRF served as mobile security, drivers, expeditors, and internal defense. One possible solution may to bring the current QRF members on as regular staff to perform the same functions.

As I mentioned in my below message, we were already looking to meet with 17 February Brigade leadership at their previous request. Due to this recent development, we are looking to expedite things. [REDACTED] (acting Mission PO) and I are trying to get something scheduled for tomorrow – before [REDACTED] arrival on Monday. Separately, [REDACTED] is already scheduled to meet with two brigade

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commanders tomorrow who appear to be affiliated with 17 February. I'll let you know how all this develops.

Cheers,

Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
Diplomatic Security Service  
US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

@state.gov

Libyan mobile:

Libyan mobile from the US:

Benghazi desk VOIP from the US:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 7:01 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

Thanks for the feedback. Our 17 February QRF has passed that their leadership would like to meet with us. No mention of the MOA, though. Do you have any guidance on whether to attempt to have an updated MOA formally signed/executed with the 17 February Brigade commander? If it was never formally signed previously, I'm not sure of the necessity to do so at this point. I'll keep you guys in the loop on our interactions as we schedule and meet with them.

Cheers,

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 1:28 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

As I recall, the MOA was never shown to the 17 February Brigade commanders. At the time, the RSO was unsure what commanders response would be so it was never formally executed. I would suggest that it be reviewed again by the guys on the ground and updated to for your current conditions.

.BU  
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

C05393607

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 07, 2012 8:04 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Benghazi QRF agreement

[REDACTED]

Any insight into this?

Cheers,

[REDACTED]

---

Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
 Diplomatic Security Service  
 US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

[REDACTED]@state.gov

Libyan mobile: [REDACTED]  
 Libyan mobile from the US: [REDACTED]  
 Benghazi desk VOIP from the US: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 07, 2012 4:11 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Benghazi QRF agreement

Gents,  
 Upon my departure in lye October, I believe this was still being looked at HQ levels, to include IP and L. From my understanding, there was concern of the longevity of our Benghzi mission, and whether Tripoli would have similar needs.

[REDACTED] may have better recollection.

Regards, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 07, 2012 08:26 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Benghazi QRF agreement

C05393607

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Good morning. I was hoping you could help us track down the location of a signed copy of an agreement with the TNC for Mission Benghazi's 17 February Brigade QRF personnel we believe was completed during your time here. We've located several softcopy drafts, and a complete yet unsigned and possible final hardcopy version of this document with your name on the signature line. Any insight you're able to provide will be much appreciated. All the best...

Cheers,

Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
Diplomatic Security Service  
US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

@state.gov

Libyan mobile:

Libyan mobile from the US:

Benghazi desk VOIP from the US:

C05396697

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RSO Office  
US MISSION  
BENGHAZI, LIBYA

Unclassified

## Memorandum

DATE: August 14, 2012  
TO: US Mission Tripoli, Libya  
THRU: A/RSO - [REDACTED]  
FROM: ARSO - [REDACTED]  
RE: Security improvements to TOC door

RSO Benghazi requests security upgrades to the interior door of US Mission Benghazi's Tactical Operations Center (TOC). At present the primary access to the TOC is a hollow-core particle wood door. The TOC serves as the post-communication center (PCC) for the entire Mission and is part of the general Classified Information Handling System (CIHS). Additionally, the TOC serves as the safe haven for the officers and employees working within Villa B (Main Office building). Finally, US Mission Benghazi is currently rated High for both crime and terrorism and Critical for political violence. For these reasons the door to the TOC should be upgraded for improved forced entry and ballistic resistance in accordance with 12 FAH-5 Appendix H.

ARSO [REDACTED] has worked with IMO/MGT officer [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], the landlord of our facilities, to address the modification of the TOC door. It is believed that significant improvements to the safety and strength of the door can be made with minimal cost and from locally obtained materials.

[REDACTED]  
ARSO

[REDACTED]  
Acting RSO

CC: File

C05396697

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.**Quick Reaction Force (QRF) Work Requirements**

1. A contingent of no less than three QRF members will be on the compound when the Principal Officer is present.
2. One QRF member will be at the front gate (Charlie One) daily from 0800 until 0000.
3. One QRF member will be on roving patrol daily between the hours of 0000 until 0800
4. One QRF member will accompany an agent to and from the airport for all Chief of Mission (COM) designated staff arrivals and departures.
5. At minimum two QRF will provide PRS support on all movements outside of the compound that are deemed critical by the Regional Security Officer (RSO).
6. All QRF staff will participate in weekly training sessions designated by the RSO.
7. Weekly meetings will be held on Tuesday at 1530 with the RSO and are mandatory for an English speaker to attend.
8. Regular work hours are 0800 until 2000 but may be adjusted by RSO.
9. Mission critical business may be conducted at all hours of the day or night. The RSO shall notify all QRF personnel as soon as practical to prepare for any movement taking place outside of regular work hours.
10. RSO determines movement plans, mission security procedures and training operations.

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.





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# **INTERVIEW OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #2**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 19, 2015

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

DANA CHIPMAN, *Chief Counsel*  
MARK GRIDER, *Deputy General Counsel*  
CARLTON DAVIS, *Counsel*  
SARA BARRINEAU, *Investigator*  
SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*  
KIM BETZ, *Member Outreach Liaison and Counsel*  
HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*  
PETER KENNY, *Minority Senior Counsel*  
KENDAL ROBINSON, *Minority Detailee*

FOR \* \* \*

RAEKA SAFAI

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*

1           Mr. Davis. This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED]  
2           [REDACTED] conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi.  
3           This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the  
4           committee's investigation into the attacks on the U.S.  
5           diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and matters related  
6           to it pursuant to House Resolution 557 of the 113th Congress  
7           and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

8           Agent [REDACTED], can you please give us your full name  
9           for the record.

10          Mr. [REDACTED].

11          Mr. Davis. Let me first start off by saying that we  
12          very much appreciate your appearance today and that you have  
13          agreed voluntarily to conduct this interview. My name is  
14          Carlton Davis. I'm counsel with the committee's majority  
15          staff, and we'll briefly go around the room and have everyone  
16          here introduce themselves so you know who everybody is,  
17          starting with you.

18          Ms. Barrineau. I'm Sara Barrineau. I'm with the  
19          majority staff.

20          Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority staff.

21          Ms. Robinson. Kendal Robinson with the minority staff.

22          Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority staff.

23          Mr. Evers. Austin Evers, State Department.

24          Ms. Safai. Raeka Safai, American Foreign Service  
25          Association.

1 Ms. Betz. Kim Betz with the majority staff.

2 Mr. Grider. Mark Grider with the majority.

3 Mr. Chipman. I'm Dana Chipman from the majority staff.

4 Mr. Davis. Before we begin, I'll go over the ground  
5 rules with you and explain the procedures that we're going to  
6 use today. The way that questioning normally proceeds before  
7 this committee is that a member from the majority will ask  
8 questions for up to 1 hour and then the minority will have  
9 the opportunity to ask questions for an equal amount of time,  
10 if they choose to do. We generally adhere to the 1-hour time  
11 limit per side. We have some variations by agreement, but  
12 that's generally what you should expect.

13 Questions may only be asked by a Member of Congress or a  
14 designated staff member of the committee. And the majority  
15 and the minority will rotate back and forth for an hour until  
16 each side has exhausted all the questions that they want to  
17 ask of you, and then you can go home and put this behind you.

18 Unlike testimony or deposition that you may have  
19 experienced in Federal or State Court, the committee format  
20 is not that formal and it is also not bound by the Federal  
21 rules of evidence. You or your counsel may raise an  
22 objection for privilege, and that is subject to review by the  
23 chairman of the committee. If those objections cannot be  
24 resolved during the interview, you may be required to return  
25 for deposition or hearing.

1           Members and staff of the committee cannot raise  
2     objections, and so, again, you and your counsel can raise  
3     objections but nobody else may raise objections to the  
4     questions that are being asked. We've not really had a  
5     problem with this in the past, but just wanted to make sure  
6     that you knew that's how we're going to proceed.

7           Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

8           Mr. Davis. After repeated request of your counsel, this  
9     interview is taking place entirely in a classified setting to  
10    protect certain sensitivities. Given that fact, it is our  
11    expectation that you will answer all questions posed to you  
12    to the best of your ability.

13          Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

14          Mr. Davis. You're welcome to confer with your counsel  
15    at any time during the interview, and we will allot you  
16    whatever amount of time you need and however many number of  
17    times you may need to discuss with her. It's just a matter  
18    of -- if it's just a matter of you needing a question  
19    clarified or you didn't hear all the question or missed a  
20    part of the question, just let us know, and we can repeat or  
21    restate the question so that we make sure you understand the  
22    question that's being asked of you.

23          Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

24          Mr. Davis. We'll take a break whenever is convenient or  
25    whenever you request a break. We want to make sure that

1       you're as comfortable as possible. Generally, we've gone the  
2       first hour of questioning and then we'll take a 5- to  
3       10-minute break, and then the staff over here will rearrange  
4       chairs and then we'll go for another hour of questioning.

5             Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

6             Mr. Davis. Normally, we've gone for 2 hours and then  
7       broken for lunch and then came back for an afternoon session,  
8       so we'll see where we are at the end of those 2 hours.

9             As you can see, there is an official reporter here  
10       taking down the proceedings so that everything we say will be  
11       in a written record. So it's very important to answer out  
12       loud and not nod and not shake the head.

13            Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

14            Mr. Davis. The other thing for the reporter's sake is  
15       that we should wait until each other finishes before we start  
16       talking. I'm probably the most guilty person of that here.  
17       So, I'll do my best not to interrupt any of your answers, and  
18       if you could be cognizant of the fact that I'm going to  
19       finish my question before you answer, that would be  
20       appreciated.

21            We are here today because this committee is  
22       investigating the attacks that occurred in Benghazi and  
23       matters related to it, and it is understood that you have  
24       direct knowledge of that. So, we're going to ask you that  
25       you just give us your best recollection today. If you don't

1 fully recall an incident or some of the information that a  
2 question requires, just tell us as much as you can remember.

3 If there's somebody else who was present at that time  
4 that may also have direct knowledge, it would be helpful if  
5 you could identify that person for us. If you just don't  
6 recollect a particular memory, just say so. We understand  
7 that it's been 2 and-a-half years since your time in Libya.  
8 Memories fade, recollections are not 100 percent after the  
9 fact, and that's just human nature, and we understand that.

10 Do you understand that you are required to answer  
11 questions from Congress truthfully?

12 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

13 Mr. Davis. And do you understand that that applies to  
14 committees and committee staff, as well?

15 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

16 Mr. Davis. Do you understand that any witness who  
17 provides false testimony is subject to penalties for perjury  
18 and making false statements?

19 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

20 Mr. Davis. As you sit here today, is there any reason  
21 that you would be unable to provide truthful testimony to the  
22 committee?

23 Mr. [REDACTED] No.

24 Mr. Davis. It is our understanding that you are here  
25 with your counsel today. And who is your counsel?

1           Mr. [REDACTED] Raeka -- I can't say your last name. I'm  
2       sorry.

3           Ms. Safai. Safai.

4           Mr. [REDACTED] Safai.

5           Mr. Davis. And we also understand that you have  
6       affirmatively requested a member of the State Department here  
7       today; is that correct?

8           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

9           Mr. Davis. So that's the end of my preamble.

10          Heather, if you want to say anything before we begin?

11          Ms. Sawyer. Yes, just briefly.

12          Mr. [REDACTED] again, thank you so much for spending some  
13       time with us today. We truly appreciate it and look forward  
14       to hearing from you about some of your firsthand experience.

15                The request had been made by your lawyer on your behalf,  
16       and it was our understanding that it was also your request  
17       that a representative of the Department of Justice and the  
18       FBI be able to attend the session just to make sure that we  
19       were not entering into law enforcement-sensitive information  
20       that might risk the potential prosecution of the attackers  
21       from that night.

22                The ranking member fully supported that request. The  
23       State Department, your attorney on your behalf, had also  
24       requested the State Department. The chairman has acceded to  
25       that request and accommodated it, which we are very grateful



1 for. The ranking member also supported that.

2 So, we are hopeful that they will reconsider going  
3 forward with regard to this handful -- you and only one more  
4 remain -- but to allow the Justice Department to be present.  
5 And I just wanted the ranking member's support for that on  
6 the record.

7 And then, Ms. Safai, if you had anything to add to that.

8 Ms. Safai. No. You've raised all the points, and we  
9 appreciate the ability to start in a classified setting. So,  
10 thank you for that.

11 Mr. Davis. Before we begin, do you have any questions,  
12 or do you need any clarity on procedures or anything like  
13 that?

14 Mr. [REDACTED] No.

15 Mr. Evers. I have one question, Carlton, which is, do  
16 we have a level of classification for this transcript? It  
17 looks -- the lowest level of classification in the room.

18 Mr. Davis. It's our understanding that Raeka only has a  
19 TS.

20 Ms. Safai. TS.

21 Mr. Evers. Is that the lowest in the room? Then we  
22 should proceed on the record as, you know, top secret and go  
23 from there.

24 Mr. Davis. Okay. And with that, I'll begin my hour.

25 Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

## EXAMINATION

BY MR. DAVIS:

Q I was hoping you could start by just giving us a little bit of background information about yourself, when you joined DSS, and any prior experiences that you had before.

A Yeah. I joined DS in 2011, I think; before that, I was in the Army for about 7 and-a-half years; and then before that, college.

Q When you joined DS in 2011, what type of training did you receive when you first joined?

A So, the basic-agent training course I attended. Subsequent to that, I attended the high-threat course, and those were the DS courses that I had attended up until that point when I was in Benghazi.

Q Did you attend the high-threat course immediately at the completion of your basic-agent training?

A No, it was about a year after.

Q Okay. And why did you decide to take the high-threat course?

A It's encouraged for agents to take the course, and it's also a requisite to serve in a high-threat post.

Q So, after the high-threat course -- I'm sorry, after your basic training and before the high-threat course began, what did you do in the interim?

A I was assigned to the Los Angeles Field Office.

1 Q Okay. And you were in the Los Angeles Field Office  
2 for the entirety of that time between?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And when you were in the Los Angeles Field Office,  
5 did you do any international travel?

6 A Yes, in support of secretary's detail.

7 Q Okay. And where did you go?

8 A A variety of places. Indonesia. There were a lot  
9 of trips. I can't remember all of them right now. Dubai.  
10 Africa. I think that was it up to that point.

11 Q How did you get pulled from the L.A. Field Office  
12 to support the secretary's detail for these international  
13 movements?

14 A When the detail goes out, they send requests for  
15 additional personnel. Those requests get funneled through  
16 the various field offices and the field offices see who's  
17 available and they assign people --

18 Q And is this something you were assigned to do, or  
19 is this -- these trips with the secretary, or was it  
20 something that you volunteered for?

21 A It's a combination of both. They ask who's  
22 available, who wants to do it, and if nobody's available,  
23 you're assigned. I tend to just volunteer when the trips  
24 come up. It's an opportunity to get out, see different parts  
25 of the world, different embassies.

1           Q     Can you recall if any of the places you went in  
2     support of the secretary's detail were high-threat posts at  
3     the time you were there?

4           A     No.

5           Q     No --

6           A     No, they weren't.

7           Q     Okay. Okay. When did you first learn about the  
8     opportunity to go to Libya?

9           A     I was interested in doing TDYs or TDY overseas. I  
10    just wanted to get some overseas experience, see what the RSO  
11    work was like in an embassy. And I can't remember exactly  
12    how I became aware, but I knew that they were actively  
13    seeking TDY agents for 60 to -- 30, 60 or 90-day TDYs to  
14    Libya.

15          Q     At the time that you learned about the Libya  
16    opportunity, were you still in the Los Angeles Field Office?

17          A     Yes.

18          Q     And had you done any TDYs outside of your time with  
19    the secretary's detail up to that point?

20          A     No.

21          Q     Do you know approximately when in 2012 you learned  
22    about Libya and the opportunity to travel there?

23          A     I want to say in the spring. I had volunteered for  
24    the TDY, and I was accepted contingent on my successful  
25    completion of the high -threat course.

1 Q Did you attend the high-threat course after  
2 learning about Libya?

3 A I requested to go to Libya after I had a confirmed  
4 slot in the high-threat course.

5 Q And, how long between when you learned about Libya  
6 did you accept the offer or did you volunteer to go?

7 A As soon as I knew that the opportunity was out  
8 there for a TDY ARSO assignment, I sent the email to  
9 volunteer.

10 Q And you knew it was a high-threat post?

11 A Yes.

12 Q And that's part of why you volunteered?

13 A I volunteered because I wanted overseas RSO  
14 experience, and it just happened to be that was the  
15 opportunity that presented itself.

16 Q Do you know approximately when in 2012 you  
17 completed your high-threat training?

18 A Approximately, the end of June, beginning of July,  
19 if I remember correctly.

20 Q Okay. And then, you were shipped out to Libya  
21 approximately on what date?

22 A It was -- I believe it was the beginning of August.

23 Q So there was roughly a month or a month and a half  
24 between --

25 A Right.

1 Q -- when you finished the high-threat training and  
2 when you went to Libya?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And what were you doing in that interim period?

5 A I went back to Los Angeles to work -- to do some  
6 casework and then I took leave.

7 Q Did you know by the time you finished high-threat  
8 training that you'd be going to Libya?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And so, the time that you were in Los Angeles and  
11 the time that you were on leave, what type of preparation or  
12 research did you do for your trip to Libya?

13 A I didn't actively do -- I mean, I Google searched  
14 Libya. There was a couple of informational emails that I  
15 received from the ARSO staff at the time. I reviewed that.  
16 But that was about it.

17 Q Do you recall reading any specific intelligence  
18 about Libya?

19 A I remember there was a TDY RSO like fact sheet, you  
20 know, what -- you know, danger pay, what to expect when you  
21 get there, how to set up travel, threat history in the area.

22 Q Did you know any agents who either were currently  
23 in Libya or had previously been in Libya --

24 A Yes.

25 Q -- before you?

1 And who were those agents?

2 A If I remember correctly, [REDACTED] was there,  
3 [REDACTED] (phonetic) was there, and [REDACTED] (phonetic)  
4 was there.

5 Q And were those people who were there prior to your  
6 arrival, or were they there -- did you know them --

7 A They were in Libya prior to my arrival and we had  
8 all gone through the basic special agent training course  
9 together.

10 Q So, when you learned that you're going to Libya,  
11 did you reach out to any of them to ask about their  
12 experiences?

13 A When I -- if I remember correctly, because this was  
14 a while ago, I did reach out to either [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED] to ask them what they thought about the -- you know,  
16 what their experiences were there.

17 Q And do you remember anything from those  
18 conversations?

19 A I remember generally that they were positive  
20 experiences.

21 Q Do you remember talking about the security  
22 situation in Libya at all?

23 A I don't specifically remember talking about it.

24 Q Before you left to go to Libya, did you have any  
25 type of formal security briefing by anybody at the State.

1 Department?

2 A No.

3 Q When you went to Libya -- well, let me ask you  
4 this: As a DS agent, you are issued weapons?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Okay. And what weapons are you issued?

7 A You're issued a SIG Sauer P229R.

8 Q Okay. And were you able to bring that to you with  
9 Libya?

10 A No.

11 Q Okay. So, you went to Libya without any weapons?

12 A I flew commercial airfare to Libya, and I received  
13 a sidearm when I got to the mission.

14 Q Okay. So what did you receive when you got to the  
15 mission?

16 A All agents are assigned an M4 and then a pistol,  
17 sidearm, SIG Sauer.

18 Q Okay. And both of those weapons you had been  
19 trained on?

20 A I had been trained on, yes.

21 Q Okay. So they were familiar to you in how to  
22 operate them?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Okay. So every agent in -- you went to Tripoli; is  
25 that correct?



1 A Yes.

2 Q So every agent in Tripoli had both an M4 and a  
3 pistol?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Okay. So, when you arrived in Tripoli, did you fly  
6 commercially? Were you on your own, or did you have somebody  
7 accompanying you?

8 A No, I flew commercially on my own. I think I  
9 flew -- I actually ended up flying into Tripoli with another  
10 agent who was in Germany at the same time, the same as [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED].

12 Q Okay. And was he going to Tripoli, as well?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Okay. And so when you arrived at Tripoli, were you  
15 met at the airport? How did you get over to the mission?

16 A Yeah, we were met at the airport. The embassy had  
17 sent an expediter out to meet us. We collected our luggage,  
18 and he drove us to the embassy.

19 Q So an expediter, is that a --

20 A It's a locally-engaged staff member who tends to  
21 have airport contacts that work in the embassy.

22 Q Okay. So, when you were I should your M4 and your  
23 pistol, did that occur at the airport or did that occur when  
24 you actually got to the mission?

25 A No, that occurred in the TOC after I got there.

1 Q Okay. So the expediter, the fellow from Germany,  
2 and yourself all went from the airport to the mission; is  
3 that correct?

4 A If I remember correctly.

5 Q The three of you?

6 A Yes.

7 Q Okay. You arrived to the mission. What happened  
8 when you arrived at the mission?

9 A We had a brief, you know, overview of the -- what  
10 was going on, how the -- like, how the -- what the work  
11 schedule would be. We were taken to our quarters. We were  
12 issued weapons, embassy badges. And generally, if I remember  
13 correctly, we were told what our responsibilities would be  
14 while we were there.

15 Ms. Barrineau. Did that include a security brief about  
16 the security in Tripoli?

17 Mr. [REDACTED] We were briefed by, I can't remember the  
18 TDY agent who was there. It wasn't like a formal brief that  
19 you would typically get, but it's generally what the RSOs  
20 get.

21 BY MR. DAVIS:

22 Q When you say it wasn't will like a formal brief,  
23 like --

24 A Typically, when you arrive at an embassy, there's  
25 a, it's called a newcomers brief. Everybody sits down. The

1 RSO goes over a PowerPoint. But typically that's geared for  
2 the general embassy staff where they go over all the threats  
3 in a formal setting and then afterwards they issue you a  
4 badge. We did that more informally while they were  
5 generating the badges. They talked about the security  
6 environment, the threats, the areas of town to avoid,  
7 problems that they had seen or things that they thought would  
8 happen.

9 Q All right. So, when you arrived in Tripoli, do you  
10 remember the exact date of when you arrived to Tripoli?

11 A I do not.

12 Q Okay. Does on or about August 14, does that sound  
13 like that could be around the same timeframe?

14 A That sounds about right.

15 Q Okay. So you mentioned that you had a brief  
16 overview, and you were basically told what your work schedule  
17 would be during your time there.

18 A Yes.

19 Q Do you recall being told what that was?

20 A I don't remember the specific work schedule. I  
21 remember that we -- I mean, we tend to work -- we tended to  
22 work quite a bit because there weren't -- there was a lot of  
23 stuff going on and there weren't that many agents there, so I  
24 don't remember exactly what it was.

25 Q What was your responsibility -- what were your

1 responsibilities as an agent?

2 A Generally, we would run the TOC. We'd clear  
3 mission requests. We'd help plan movements for the next day.  
4 We would do QRF protection.

5 Q Are these all things you were involved in --

6 A Yes.

7 Q -- or just DS generally? Okay. All right.

8 How many other DS personnel were there, if you can  
9 remember, when you arrived?

10 A If I remember correctly, there was the RSO, there  
11 were two permanently assigned ARSOs, and there were three or  
12 four other TDY agents at the time.

13 Q All right. Were there any other security personnel  
14 at the mission in addition to the individuals you just  
15 mentioned and yourself?

16 A There were locally hired body guards and then there  
17 was the guard force.

18 Q Okay. Do you remember approximately how many local  
19 BGs there were?

20 A I do not.

21 Q Okay. And the LGF contingent, do you know  
22 approximately how large they were?

23 A I do not remember that.

24 Q Okay. Do you know who the LGF contingent was, the  
25 name of a group or a company?

1 A I don't.

2 Q Okay. Were there other security personnel there at  
3 the mission in addition to just DS agents, the locally-hired  
4 bodyguards and --

5 A There was a DOD element there.

6 Q Okay. And how many DOD individuals were there, if  
7 you can remember?

8 A At that time, I believe that there were six, but  
9 I'm not sure.

10 Q Okay. Did you have any interaction with these DOD  
11 individuals?

12 A Just passing conversations.

13 Q Okay. Do you remember any of their names?

14 A I do not.

15 Q Do you know what their mission was when they were  
16 there?

17 A I don't.

18 Q Okay. Who was your supervisor when you were there?

19 A [REDACTED]

20 Q [REDACTED] And he was the RS0?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Okay. Had you met the Ambassador before you  
23 traveled to Libya?

24 A Before, no.

25 Q Before, no, okay. And when was the first time you

1 met him when you were in Libya?

2 A I think I had been in Libya for a couple of weeks,  
3 because I think the Ambassador was out, and then it was just  
4 one morning he came into the TOC.

5 Q Okay. And how many agents were -- were there one  
6 agent or more than one agent that was permanently assigned to  
7 the TOC?

8 A The TOC was a rotating duty so it wasn't a  
9 permanent assignment, and you would work the TOC in shifts.  
10 So, there was one agent who was required to be there at all  
11 times, and then during the day it's where -- it was  
12 essentially the RSO office so everybody who was on duty would  
13 be in the TOC.

14 Q So, can you describe roughly the size of the TOC in  
15 comparison to this room, for example?

16 A I don't know. So, if you cut this room in half,  
17 that would probably be about the size of the TOC.

18 Q Okay. Do you know if there's any classified  
19 information that was kept in the TOC?

20 A There was no classified information, to my  
21 knowledge.

22 Q Okay. So, you never saw any printouts that were --

23 A No.

24 Q -- marked classified?

25 A I didn't see anything with a cover sheet on it, no.

1           Q     Okay. So you mentioned that you manned the TOC,  
2     you helped plan movements for the next day, you worked with  
3     the QRF.

4           A     Yes.

5           Q     Was that the majority of your responsibility during  
6     your time in Tripoli, or were there other responsibilities as  
7     well?

8           A     That was the majority. We also -- I also did  
9     hiring, interviewing for additional bodyguards, and we also  
10    assisted the RSO with the internal defense plan.

11          Q     Okay. Had you ever worked on an internal defense  
12    plan before?

13          A     Not with the State Department.

14          Q     Okay. And had you ever interviewed locals for  
15    bodyguard positions before?

16          A     No.

17          Q     What type of instruction were you given when you  
18    were doing these interviews?

19          A     They told us to think of it kind of like the BEX  
20    exam. There was a list of questions that we went over with  
21    the applicants. And it was -- who else was in there? It was  
22    myself and a person from H.R. I think that was it, but I  
23    can't remember.

24          Q     How often did you leave the mission?

25          A     Almost daily. The villas were separated or were at

1 a different location than the CMR, so, almost daily we would  
2 leave to go to the CMR. There were a couple of times where  
3 we would take some of the FSOs on off-site visits. And then  
4 when I did go with the QRF, so maybe once or twice a week  
5 QRFs.

6 Q So, when you took the FSOs on off-site visits,  
7 generally how many DS agents traveled with an FSO?

8 A So it was, if you were leaving the Tripoli area,  
9 there was a requirement that there would be at least one  
10 armed agent. Typically, when we went outside of the Tripoli  
11 area, they -- we took three, maybe four.

12 Q Okay. And in addition to one armed agent and the  
13 FSO, was it normally just the two of you, or were there  
14 others involved as well in that movement? Any local staff?

15 A So, I mean, the drivers would be the local staff  
16 that would be there. And let me clarify just -- there were  
17 members of an MSD team who were in Tripoli at the time.

18 Q When you arrived?

19 A When I arrived, yes.

20 Q And how many members of the MSD team were there?

21 A I can't remember offhand. I want to say about  
22 four.

23 Q Do you know if they stayed the entire time you were  
24 there? Did they depart at any point?

25 A They did leave at one point. I think the last



1 members left a week or two before we went to Benghazi, but I  
2 can't remember exactly.

3 Q The members of the MSD team, did they have a  
4 special mission or were they incorporated in the normal DS  
5 activities?

6 A They assisted with TOC duty, but as for what their  
7 specific mention was, I believe it was to train new  
8 bodyguards, but I'm not sure.

9 Q And what was the thought by yourself, by any of the  
10 other agents or by the RSO, when the four MSD individuals  
11 departed?

12 A I don't remember having any significant thoughts  
13 about that.

14 Q Okay. You mentioned that any episode movement  
15 outside of Tripoli generally required at least one armed  
16 agent --

17 A Yes.

18 Q -- and DS generally took three individuals?

19 A On the ones that I went there were three to four  
20 people, if I remember correctly.

21 Q What about movements inside the city?

22 A Inside the city, we would -- 24 hours before their  
23 mission, they would submit a mission request. We would  
24 review the location. If it was a known location that we felt  
25 was safe, we'd approve the mission and we'd take all our

1 approved missions and we would centrally locate a QRF team to  
2 respond should there be a need. But generally, they  
3 weren't -- like, an agent would not accompany every single  
4 FSO on every single mission.

5 Q So, there were times where an FSO would make a  
6 movement inside the city without a DS agent?

7 A Yes, to an approved location.

8 Q Okay. What was your sense of the general overall  
9 security situation of Tripoli at the time?

10 A Tripoli could be a dangerous place, but there was  
11 nothing at that point that I remember that was specifically  
12 targeted towards Americans. It was more militia-on-militia  
13 violence and civil unrest that Americans could find  
14 themselves involved in, if you were in the wrong place.

15 Q So, was there any hesitation by yourself or by any  
16 other member of DS to allow the FSOs to make a movement  
17 without a DS agent present?

18 A No. We -- I mean, we would -- like I said, we  
19 would clear the sites that they wanted to go. We would make  
20 sure that those sites were known, and if they weren't or we  
21 didn't feel comfortable with it, we would deny the mission  
22 request.

23 Q Did the situation worsen at all during your time,  
24 the security situation in Tripoli?

25 A In Tripoli, not that I remember?

1           Q     Okay. You kind of tilt your head and say, "in  
2     Tripoli." Why do you say that?

3           A     Well, you ask me if the security situation worsened  
4     and then we had Benghazi, so it got worse.

5           Q     Oh, okay. Okay. But in Tripoli, not that you  
6     remember?

7           A     No.

8           Q     Okay. While you were in Tripoli, did you receive  
9     daily or weekly security updates from the RSO or other  
10    individuals?

11          A     Yes. If there was anything of concern that would  
12    happen, if there was any specific threat intel, that would be  
13    relayed to us by the RSO.

14          Q     Okay. And was there any specific threat intel that  
15    you could recall while you were there?

16          A     Yeah, there was -- we got a specific threat that  
17    there was -- there could be a protest. The RSO briefed us.  
18    The DCM was the charge at the time. The following day he  
19    briefed the embassy staff, and it turned out that the protest  
20    never materialized.

21          Q     And how did you learn or how did the RSO learn that  
22    there was a specific threat that there could be a protest?

23          A     I don't know.

24          Q     You don't know, okay. So, what was relayed to you,  
25    just the fact that there might be a protest?

1 A That there might be a protest.

2 Q Okay. And do you know if that would have been  
3 later that day? The following day? Do you recall?

4 A Well, I remember he told us in the late afternoon  
5 for the next day, or it was either the next day or the day  
6 after, so --

7 Q So, I'm going to pass out a document for you to  
8 review, and we might be passing them out throughout the  
9 course of the interview to refresh your recollection or to  
10 discuss the document.

11 So, this is going to be Exhibit No. 1. Pass that over  
12 to you.

13 Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

14 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1  
15 was marked for identification.]

16 BY MR. DAVIS:

17 Q Take a minute to read it.

18 A Okay.

19 Q Do you recall receiving this when you were in  
20 Tripoli?

21 A I mean, the procedures set forth seem familiar. I  
22 mean, it's what we did. But I don't specifically remember  
23 seeing this document.

24 Q Do you know if this was provided in response to any  
25 particular threat?

1           A     I do not.

2           Q     So, the threat that you mentioned that there could  
3     be a protest, you don't know if this is in response to that?

4           A     No. This generally is what we followed from the  
5     time that I landed though.

6           Q     Okay. Would there have been a precipitating event  
7     that would have spurred the RSO to send this out?

8           A     I don't know. And generally, I wouldn't have been  
9     privy to those discussions between the RSO and the DCM or the  
10    Ambassador.

11          Q     Okay. You mentioned earlier that for an FSO making  
12    a movement within the city without any DS protection, DS  
13    might deny a plan?

14          A     Yes.

15          Q     Under what circumstances might that denial occur?

16          A     The number one example of that in this situation  
17    would've been to the market. Lots of the FSOs wanted to go  
18    to the market. Unfortunately, given the location, the number  
19    of people that limited avenues of ingress, we didn't feel was  
20    safe for them to go to the markets by themselves.

21          Q     So in that particular instance, it would be  
22    location based. You did not want them going?

23          A     Yes.

24          Q     Were there other reasons that you could think of?

25          A     I mean, if there was a specific threat of a

1 specific location, we would of course deny that.

2 Q Okay. Do you recall denying any other movements by  
3 an FSO?

4 A No. The ones that I remember denying were to the  
5 market.

6 Q Okay. The Ambassador, when he -- he was absent for  
7 a certain period of time and the DSM was the charge?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. So when the Ambassador came back to the  
10 country, did you make any movements with the Ambassador?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Okay. And can you describe generally what a  
13 movement by the Ambassador would entail?

14 A Yeah. So, the Ambassador would send in his  
15 schedule for the following day. We would review the schedule  
16 with the bodyguards, and we would -- once we reviewed the  
17 schedule and we got everything in, we would meet the  
18 Ambassador. The bodyguards and I would meet in the morning,  
19 and then I would go with the Ambassador's driver outside of  
20 his residence, and I'd wait for the Ambassador to come out  
21 and we'd start making our movements. We'd radio our SP time,  
22 when we were starting. We'd radio in when we reached a  
23 location. We'd radio in when we were leaving, and we'd radio  
24 en route to the next location.

25 Q So, when you say you're radioing, who would you be

1 radioing?

2 A The TOC.

3 Q Okay. So, how many movements -- or not how many  
4 movements -- but for movement, when you pick the Ambassador  
5 up and you take him somewhere in Tripoli --

6 A Uh-huh.

7 Q -- how many vehicles, how many individuals would  
8 that require?

9 A It would be one vehicle. It would be the  
10 Ambassador in the back, his driver and myself in the front  
11 seat. And then there would be an advance team who would get  
12 to the Ambassador's location in advance of him.

13 Q And who would comprise the advance team?

14 A It would be the bodyguards.

15 Q Okay. So, why were you with the Ambassador on  
16 these particular indications?

17 A So we were -- like, we would be the AICs for the  
18 Ambassador's detail. So, we would generally get out before  
19 the Ambassador. We'd talk to the bodyguards. We'd make sure  
20 everything was okay. And our job there was to be the  
21 American security element there to see if anything didn't  
22 look right or if we had specific concerns.

23 Q But you particularly, you said you were an AIC for  
24 the Ambassador?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay. And how long -- that's agent in charge?

2 A Right.

3 Q And how long were you an AIC for the Ambassador?

4 A Maybe a week.

5 Q A week, okay. And when did you learn you were  
6 going to be an AIC for the Ambassador?

7 A It was -- I mean, it was a rotating duty. So, when  
8 [REDACTED] put out the schedule, that's how it kind of  
9 worked. I don't remember specifically when.

10 Q So, prior to you being AIC for the Ambassador, had  
11 you done any movements with the Ambassador?

12 A No.

13 Q Okay. But you'd done movements with other FSOs?

14 A Yes. And with the DCM charge.

15 Q Okay. But when you were AIC, the first time you  
16 took the Ambassador out for movement was your first time  
17 making a movement with the Ambassador?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. So was it -- normally, was it just the AIC  
20 and the Ambassador and the driver in the advance team? Were  
21 there any other DS agents that would make a move?

22 A No, generally no. It would be the driver, myself,  
23 the Ambassador, and whoever, if somebody was riding with the  
24 Ambassador, if he had a guest.

25 Q Did the Ambassador ever have guests?



1           A     There were a couple of FSOs who would occasionally  
2     accompany him on missions -- or to meetings, sorry.

3           Q     Do you know if any non-American citizens ever  
4     accompanied him on missions in the vehicle?

5           A     Not that I recall.

6           Q     Okay. So just you, as a single DS agent, did that  
7     seem like an appropriate amount of security for the  
8     Ambassador moving around Tripoli?

9           A     I was not concerned about being with the Ambassador  
10    by myself for those movements.

11          Q     Okay. And why weren't you concerned?

12          A     We had -- like I said, we had QRF centrally located  
13    throughout the city. We had an advance team at the site  
14    before we got there, and then we had received the schedules  
15    the day before, so I felt comfortable with the move.

16          Q     So, when you were moving with the Ambassador, what  
17    weapons did you bring with you?

18          A     When I was driving with the Ambassador, I had my  
19    sidearm, and if I remember correctly, we had M4s, but we  
20    would always leave those in the car.

21          Q     And how many M4s?

22          A     Just one.

23          Q     Just one, okay.

24          Did the driver? Was he armed?

25          A     No.

1 Q No, okay. And the advance team, were they armed?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Okay. And do you know what weapons the advance  
4 team were carrying?

5 A Again, if I remember correctly, because it's been a  
6 while, they had sidearms, pistols, and rifles.

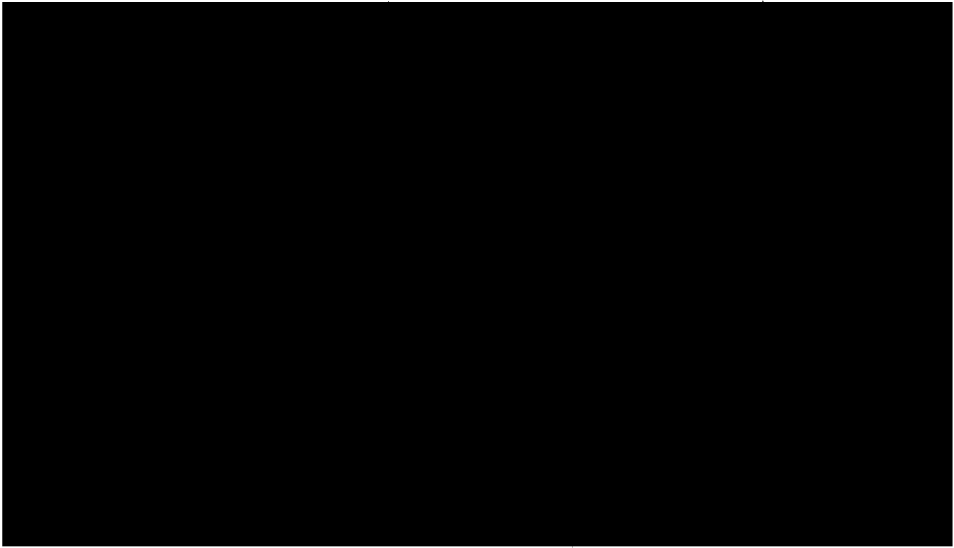
7 Q Okay. What type of communications devices did you  
8 bring with you?

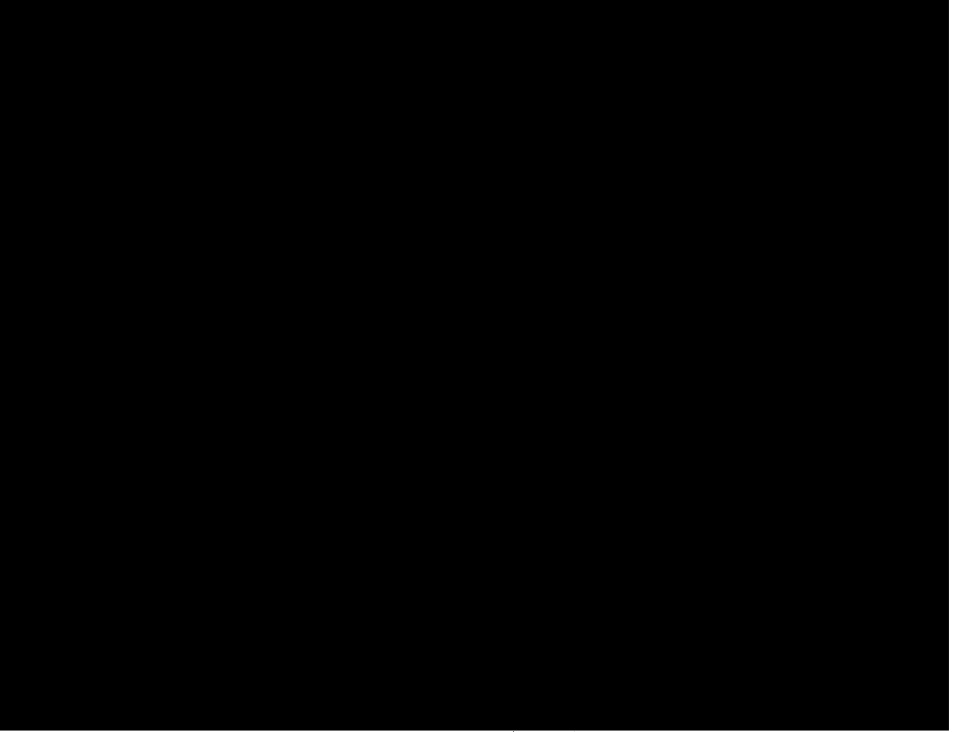
9 A Radios and cellphones. Handheld radios and  
10 cellphones.

11 Q Okay. Do you know if the Ambassador carried any  
12 type of personal GPS device with him?

13 A Yes.

14 Q And what can you tell us about that?





16 Q Okay. Do you know if there were others?

17 A There were almost certainly others, but --

18 Q Okay. What was the Ambassador's general  
19 cooperation with your security assessments and decisions  
20 regarding his movements?

21 A From what I remember, in my limited interactions  
22 with the Ambassador, I remember him being -- like, he would  
23 listen. I wouldn't say that he was difficult to work with.

24 Q Okay. You mentioned earlier, you weren't concerned  
25 about being with the Ambassador for the movements; is that

1 right?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Given the number of individuals you had for the  
4 movements, is that similar to what you were taught in your  
5 high-threat tactical training course?

6 A Yeah. The general -- generally what happened is  
7 what we go over in high threat. And security and what you  
8 need to do, is dictated by the environment, and at that time,  
9 the security precautions that we were taking seemed  
10 sufficient.

11 Q So when you say what you need to do is dictated by  
12 the environment, are you talking about the general security  
13 situation, or are you talking about the personnel or  
14 resources that are available?


15 A Well, I think the two go hand in hand. However, in  
16 this case, if we needed an additional agent to go out, there  
17 were the people to support that in Tripoli.

18 Q Okay. The Ambassador's movements on the  
19 compound --

20 A Uh-huh.

21 Q -- when you were the AIC, was it your  
22 responsibility to track his movements on the compound?

23 A No. On the compound, the Ambassador goes where he  
24 wants to go.



13 Q Okay. Did the Ambassador, was he -- well, let me  
14 ask you this: Were you around him at all when he was on the  
15 compound?

16 A You know, incidentally, like if he would go to the  
17 cafeteria and I was in the cafeteria, we would discuss the  
18 next movement, when he planned to leave the compound, again,  
19 so we know -- we would know when to meet. And if he needed  
20 to change his schedule for any reason, he would call the TOC  
21 and that's where we would be.

22 Q Was he ever on the phone when you were traveling in  
23 the vehicle together?

24 A I'm sure that he was. I can't remember any  
25 specific conversations though.

1 Q Do you know who he may have been talking to on the  
2 phone?

3 A No.

4 Q Okay. During your time in Tripoli, do you recall  
5 having any, I guess, VIP visits? Or I'm not sure what the  
6 proper terminology would be.

7 A It depends if you're talking about CODELs,  
8 congressional delegations. No, not while I was there.

9 Q Okay. Were there any other individuals from the  
10 U.S. Government who traveled to Tripoli while you were there?

11 A Not that I can remember right now.

12 Q Do you know if there's anybody from the White House  
13 who came to visit?

14 A No, not that I remember. If you're talking about  
15 John McCain, when he came down, that was before I got there.

16 Q Okay. Does the name Benjamin Fishman ring a bell?

17 A It does not.

18 Q Did anybody from the State Department come visit  
19 while you were there?

20 A Not to my knowledge.

21 Q Okay. Okay. Do you ever recall having any  
22 conversations with the RSO about the bodyguards or about the  
23 Local Guard Force in Tripoli?

24 A I don't remember having a specific conversation.  
25 I'm sure we would have discussed the bodyguards and the Local

1 Guard Force, specifically because we were in the process of  
2 hiring additional ones.

3 Ms. Barrineau. Let me ask a question. Were you  
4 generally satisfied with the performance of the bodyguards in  
5 the Local Guard Force?

6 Mr. [REDACTED] I remember, specifically, with the  
7 bodyguards, being fairly impressed with their  
8 professionalism.

9 BY MR. DAVIS:

10 Q When did you first learn about the Ambassador's  
11 trip to Benghazi?

12 A I don't remember a specific date. Probably, if I  
13 were going to have to guess, maybe a week to a week and a  
14 half before we departed.

15 Q And did you know that you would be accompanying the  
16 Ambassador to Benghazi?

17 A I didn't specifically know that I would be  
18 accompanying the Ambassador on that trip when I first heard  
19 about it.

20 Q And when did you learn that you would be  
21 accompanying the Ambassador?

22 A Maybe 3 or 4 days before we actually left.

23 Q Okay. And did you have any thoughts about that?

24 A No. I knew that it was the first time that he'd  
25 been there for a while, and I knew that the security

1 environment in Benghazi, from my understanding, was a little  
2 less permissible, so we were all more focused on the types of  
3 movements that would happen and arranging everything, but  
4 other than that, no.

5 Q So, how is it your understanding that the security  
6 environment in Benghazi was less permissible?

7 A Well, if I -- there -- I had known that there had  
8 been some attacks that were targeted against other foreign  
9 missions, and I know that -- and I had known that there were  
10 more militia-on-militia attacks in that area than there were  
11 in Tripoli.

12 Q Okay. And how do you know that there were attacks  
13 targeted against other western --

14 A I get email from, I think he was the desk officer  
15 for Libya at the time, before I arrived and detailed a lot of  
16 the attacks that had happened, not just in Benghazi, but in  
17 Libya in general.

18 Mr. Davis. Okay. I just wanted to point out, we have  
19 another individual with us here. Do you want to introduce  
20 yourself?

21 Mr. Westmoreland. Lynn Westmoreland from Georgia's  
22 3rd District.

23 Mr. [REDACTED] Good morning, sir.

24 Mr. Westmoreland. Thanks for your service, sir.

25 Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.



1           Mr. Davis. So we were just talking about his time in  
2   Tripoli and he just learned that he was about to go to  
3   Benghazi, so we were asking questions about that.

4           BY MR. DAVIS:.

5           Q    What were you told about what the Ambassador would  
6   be doing in Benghazi?

7           A    Well, we went over -- I mean, I remember going over  
8   the schedule. I remember the Ambassador being particularly  
9   interested in going to Benghazi because he had not been  
10   there -- if I'm remembering correctly -- since he had been  
11   appointed Ambassador. And then, yeah, that's about it.

12          Q    So, when you say you were going over his schedule,  
13   who did you go over his schedule with?

14          A    There was a Country Team meeting before. I can't  
15   remember exactly how long before, where immediately following  
16   the Country Team I was invited in with [REDACTED], the RS0. We  
17   went over the Ambassador's schedule, we talked about our  
18   security concerns, and we made arrangements to limit  
19   movements off of the compound, limit press events to the day  
20   before the Ambassador left. Yeah.

21          Q    So I'm going to pass out Exhibit 2 for you. Take a  
22   look at that.

23                               [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2  
24                               was marked for identification.]

25          Mr. Evers. Carlton, while he's reading it, can we read

1 the doc ID of both Exhibit 1 and Exhibit 2 into the record,  
2 just for --

3 Mr. Davis. Sure. So the document ID for Exhibit 1,  
4 U.S. Department of State doc No. C05390143; document ID for  
5 Exhibit 2 is U.S. Department of State doc No. C05395200.

6 BY MR. DAVIS:

7 Q Got it?

8 A Yes.

9 Q So, you mentioned the expanded Country Team  
10 meeting.

11 A Yes.

12 Q This was on Sunday, September 9, the day before you  
13 went to Benghazi. Is this the Country Team meeting that you  
14 were referring to?

15 A I believe it is.

16 Q Okay. And generally speaking, who attends a  
17 Country Team meeting?

18 A All the principal officers of the embassy. And for  
19 the expanded Country Team, it is expanded to include us as  
20 the members of the RSO staff because we were going to be  
21 accompanying the Ambassador on this trip.

22 Q Okay. And you mentioned after the Country Team  
23 meeting, you and [REDACTED] were invited to a follow-up  
24 meeting?

25 A I mean, there almost certainly would've been a

1 follow-up meeting where we discuss the things that came out  
2 of the Country Team.

3 Q Would the deputy chief-of-mission have been in that  
4 follow-up meeting?

5 A I don't remember specifically, but --

6 Q So looking at Exhibit 2, the 10:00 to 10:30  
7 meetings, "Meeting RE: Benghazi trip. Villa 2 Dining Room."

8 A Right. So that would've been -- Country Team would  
9 have happened. In fact, it did happen. After they ended  
10 Country Team, that was the Benghazi trip meeting where we  
11 were invited to, but the Country Team members stayed for  
12 that.

13 Q Okay. So who else was in the Benghazi trip meeting  
14 in addition to you and Mr. [REDACTED]?

15 A The RSO, the DCM, I think the political officer was  
16 there. There were a lot of people. I think most of the  
17 principal officers stayed for that meeting, but I can't be  
18 sure.

19 Q Okay. Was there anybody from CIA there at that  
20 meeting?

21 A There almost certainly would've been because they  
22 would've been at Country Team.

23 Q Okay. Do you recall having a briefing about the  
24 security state in Benghazi at that meeting or any other  
25 meeting prior to your departure for Benghazi?

1           A     I was -- I remember getting briefs from [REDACTED]  
2           [REDACTED].

3           Q     Okay. But did you ever get a briefing from anybody  
4     at the agency?

5           A     No.

6           Q     Okay. So, your meeting with Mr. [REDACTED], do you  
7     know how long approximately that took place?

8           A     I don't remember.

9           Q     And what did he share with you about the security  
10    state in Benghazi?

11          A     If I remember correctly -- and this was a long time  
12    ago -- we went over just a couple of the security incidents  
13    that had happened before; that -- he reaffirmed that there  
14    was no specific threat targeting Americans, but the threat of  
15    militia-on-militia violence remained constant; and that we  
16    needed to be mindful of that, because that was the most  
17    likely threat we would find ourselves embroiled in.

18          Q     Was militia-on-militia violence?

19          A     Yes, being caught in the middle of that.

20          Mr. Davis. Really briefly, we had two more guests join  
21    us, so I am going to allow them to introduce themselves.

22          Mrs. Roby. I'm Martha Roby. I represent Alabama's  
23    2nd District.

24          Mr. Gowdy. I'm Trey from South Carolina.

25                BY MR. DAVIS:

1 Q Did you know any of the agents who were currently  
2 stationed in Benghazi prior to your trip?

3 A I knew [REDACTED].

4 Q Okay. And how did you know Mr. [REDACTED]?

5 A [REDACTED] and I went to the basic agent course  
6 together.

7 Q Okay. So, during your time in Tripoli, did you  
8 talk with [REDACTED] at all, at any time prior to  
9 arriving in Benghazi?

10 A Not that I remember. I remember contacting [REDACTED]  
11 once I knew that I would be going out there, just for  
12 logistical stuff, to make sure everything was set up.

13 Q Did the contact occur via email or via telephone  
14 call?

15 A I remember having phone conversations with [REDACTED].  
16 We might have sent emails, but I can't remember.

17 Q Did he make any general comments about the security  
18 situation in Benghazi?

19 A I can't remember specifically what we talked about.

20 Q Do you recall ever reading any intelligence, either  
21 from the State Department, the CIA or any other agency before  
22 your trip to Benghazi?

23 A Other than the emails we got --

24 Q Other than the emails you got.

25 A -- not that I remember, no.

1 Q Okay. When you left to go to Benghazi, it was you,  
2 it was the Ambassador, and how many other individuals went  
3 with you?

4 A It was me and the Ambassador and one other agent,  
5 [REDACTED].

6 Q Okay. So it was the three of you. Do you recall  
7 how many DS agents remained in Tripoli at that time?

8 A Yeah. There was [REDACTED]; [REDACTED];  
9 [REDACTED]; and then one other agent. And I'm sorry,  
10 his last name is [REDACTED], we called him [REDACTED]. I can't  
11 remember his first name.

12 Q Okay. So, two of you went to Benghazi with the  
13 Ambassador --

14 A Yes.

15 Q -- and four of you stayed behind?

16 A Yes.

17 Q What other security personnel remained in Tripoli  
18 at that time?

19 A Well, that was in Tripoli.

20 Q Right, in Tripoli. But earlier, you talked about  
21 how there was an MSD team and they had departed.

22 A The MSD had departed; and then there was also, if I  
23 remember correctly, there were three members of the Army at  
24 that time who were still there.

25 Q Okay. And you don't remember any of their names?

1 A No.

2 Q And you don't remember what their mission was?

3 A No.

4 Q Do you recall during your time in Tripoli if any of  
5 these DOD assets ever accompanied the Ambassador or  
6 accompanied any of the FSOs on a movement outside the  
7 compound?

8 A To my knowledge, they did not accompany the  
9 Ambassador of the DCM. It is possible that incidentally they  
10 would have gone out with some of the FSOs, but I can't think  
11 of a specific occasion when that would have happened.

12 Q Okay. Do you know, prior to traveling to Benghazi,  
13 do you know if the Ambassador had a meeting with anybody from  
14 the CIA about the security situation?

15 A I do not know.

16 Q So, how did you and Mr. [REDACTED], and the Ambassador  
17 get to Benghazi? Tell us about your trip there.

18 A We flew commercial air down there.

19 Q Okay. Just the three of you?

20 A Yes.

21 Q All right. And where did you sit on the airplane?

22 A So, the Ambassador sat in the middle seat, and [REDACTED]  
23 and I sat on the left and right. We're big guys so it was  
24 very comfortable for him.

25 Q Approximately how large -- how many other people

1        were on the airplane?

2            A     I can't remember how many people were on the  
3        airplane, and I don't know the type of airplane it was.

4            Q     You said that you were issued weapons when you  
5        arrived in Tripoli.

6            A     Yes.

7            Q     Did you bring those weapons with you to Benghazi?

8            A     No.

9            Q     Okay. So you, the Ambassador, Mr. [REDACTED] traveled to  
10        Benghazi without any weapons?

11          A     Yes.

12          Q     Okay. How long was the flight, approximately?

13          A     Maybe 45 minutes.

14          Q     Okay. And what did you discuss with the Ambassador  
15        and Mr. [REDACTED] on the flight?

16          A     Just general stuff. The Ambassador told me I was  
17        fat. There was an airline attendant; she smiled at me. And  
18        the Ambassador told me that women like big guys, so he was a  
19        funny guy.

20          Q     Okay. Was there any discussion during the flight  
21        about the security situation in Benghazi, to your  
22        recollection?

23          A     That would've been classified, and I don't think we  
24        would have talked about classified information on a  
25        commercial airplane.



1 Q Okay. When you -- well, before we get to your  
2 arrival in Benghazi, we've had one other individual join us.

3 Ms. Brooks. Sorry to interrupt. Susan Brooks from  
4 Indiana.

5 Mr. Davis. Great. So, we have just gone through  
6 Mr. [REDACTED] training, his time in Tripoli --

7 Mr. [REDACTED]

8 Mr. Davis. I'm sorry. I'm sorry, Mr. [REDACTED]. I  
9 apologize. His training, his time in Tripoli, and his flight  
10 to Benghazi. So now we're arriving the morning of  
11 September 10 when he arrived in Benghazi.

12 I apologize for that.

13 BY MR. DAVIS:

14 Q So one question before we get to Benghazi.  
15 Approximately how many individuals, FSOs, and other American  
16 personnel remained in Tripoli when you left?

17 A Oh, I don't know how many. It's not a very large  
18 post. I don't know the exact number of personnel who were  
19 there.

20 Q More than 10? More than 20? More than 30?

21 A Specifically Americans or --

22 Q Yeah.

23 A -- locally-engaged staff?

24 Q Not locally-engaged staff. Either PCS personnel or  
25 TDY personnel.

1 A Over 20 is a good -- is a safe number, I would say.

2 Q Okay. So over 20, and you said there were four DS  
3 agents that remained in Tripoli?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Okay. All right. So, when you arrived in  
6 Benghazi, who met you at the airport?

7 A The TDY agents who were there, [REDACTED] and  
8 [REDACTED], also Mr. [REDACTED] -- I can't remember  
9 [REDACTED] first name. And then there were, if I remember  
10 correctly, there were a couple of people from the Annex who  
11 were at the airport as well.

12 Q I'm going to pass out Exhibit 3, and hopefully that  
13 could guide our conversation over the next -- I've got 12  
14 and-a-half minutes left.

15 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3  
16 was marked for identification.]

17 BY MR. DAVIS:

18 Q So, this is Exhibit 3, it is U.S. Department of  
19 State Document No. C05391109, titled, "Ambassador Chris  
20 Stevens. Benghazi, Libya: September 10-14."

21 Is this a document that you have seen before?

22 A I remember this schedule. I don't specifically  
23 remember this, but --

24 Q Okay. But you've seen something similar to this  
25 prior to your trip?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Okay. So looking under Monday, 10 September,  
3 "11:15 arrival, Benghazi Benina International Airport from  
4 Tripoli. Greeted by --" and then it's redacted. And then

5 [REDACTED]

6 A Yes.

7 Q So ARSO [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], both  
8 greeted you at the airport?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And do you know who is here under the redacted? Do  
11 you know who that individual is?

12 A I can't remember the specific name, no.

[REDACTED]

23 Q Okay. So, when you arrived at the airport, how did  
24 you travel from the airport to the mission?

25 A So, [REDACTED] met us on the tarmac. They took

1 us into their VIP waiting area. Once our baggage was  
2 offloaded, we moved by convoy from the airport to the Special  
3 Mission.

4 Q So, you say moved by convoy, how many cars were in  
5 the convoy?

6 A Again, this was a while ago. If I remember  
7 correctly, there were two vehicles. There was maybe three.

8 Q And who did you travel with?

9 A I traveled with the Ambassador.

10 Q Okay. And what types of discussions did you -- do  
11 you recall having with the Ambassador during that car ride?

12 A It was the Ambassador, myself, [REDACTED], and  
13 they -- if I remember correctly, because this was a while  
14 ago, we talked about what would happen next, pleasantries  
15 about how the flight was. [REDACTED] mentioned that there was  
16 going to be press at the counsel meeting. And, yeah, that  
17 was it.

18 Q So, you knew prior to the counsel meeting that the  
19 press was going to show up?

20 A Yes, and we tried to turn that off, but  
21 unfortunately, we couldn't. They showed up, but we sent them  
22 away.

23 Q Okay. Were you surprised to learn that there would  
24 be press at the counsel meeting?

25 A I was.

1 Q Okay. So you arrive back at the Mission Compound?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Approximately how long was the car ride, if you can  
4 remember?

5 A It wasn't very long. I can't remember. Maybe 10,  
6 15 minutes.

7 Q Okay. Did you have a weapon at that point? Were  
8 you provided a weapon when you got into the car?

9 A Yes. We were provided sidearms when we got there.  
10 When we arrived at the Special Mission Compound, we got  
11 rifles as well.

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BY MR. DAVIS:

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Q Okay. So, you arrived at the Special Mission Compound. What did you do next?

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9

A So, we got a walk-through of the compound. We talked over security procedures if something were to happen. We were taken to our quarters. We drew weapons, rifles, body armor. And then shortly after that we made a second move to the Annex where the Ambassador received security briefs.

10

11

Q So you said you -- you talked about security procedures in case something would happen?

12

13

A Yes.

14

15

Q Who did you have that discussion with?

A [REDACTED]

16

Q And do you remember what was discussed during that conversation?

17

18

19

20

A They showed us where the safe haven was, and they talked about the safe haven react plan. They talked about their plan for and their agreements for support from the local government and also from the Annex.

21

22

Q Okay. You were shown the safe haven?

A Yes.

23

24

Q And what were your thoughts on the safe haven?

25

A I mean, I remember thinking that it was an interesting choice. It was the best choice that they had at

1 the time. It was sufficient but --

2 Q Was it a safe haven the way that you would normally  
3 think of a safe haven?

4 A Yeah, I would say that it fit the requirements for  
5 a safe haven.

6 Q Were there any type of physical specifications  
7 about that particular safe haven that you felt could have  
8 been upgraded?

9 A No. I think that, like most things, you know, once  
10 something meets the requirements that it needs for that,  
11 anything else is personal judgment, and because the  
12 Ambassador was residing in Villa C, it was the closest, most  
13 secure location to take him to if something were to happen at  
14 night.

15 Q Approximately how large was the safe haven?

16 A If I remember correctly, it was not very large. If  
17 I remember correctly, it was maybe slightly larger than a  
18 walk-in closet with [REDACTED] door that was lockable from the  
19 inside, [REDACTED].

20 Q Are you familiar with the term hard room?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Is that the same thing as a safe haven? Or is that  
23 a little different?

24 A It's pretty much the same.

25 Q Okay. Were there windows in this safe haven?

1           A     No.

2           Q     There were not windows?

3           A     No.

4           Q     You were shown your quarters as well when you  
5 arrived?

6           A     Yes.

7           Q     And what were your general thoughts about your  
8 quarters?

9           A     They were sufficient.

10          Q     Okay. What were your general thoughts on the  
11 compound as a whole?

12          A     I thought the compound was large. I was surprised  
13 to see it. It was different from what I expected it to look  
14 like.

15          Q     How was it different?

16          A     I thought, I had gotten the impression that it was  
17 closer to the center of town, so it was nice that it was  
18 further pushed back; but I remember thinking that there  
19 wasn't a large guard presence when I was there.

20          Q     A large guard presence in general, or a large guard  
21 presence for a compound that size?

22          A     In general. In general.

23          Q     When you say a large guard presence, are you  
24 referring specifically to DS?

25          A     No. It was the local guards.



1 Q Okay. And, how many local guards do you recall  
2 seeing?

3 A I can't remember exactly. If I remember correctly,  
4 there were two or three at the gate, and there was also a, I  
5 think it was a police, Libyan police, that was parked there  
6 when we arrived. I remember --

7 Q There was a police car outside?

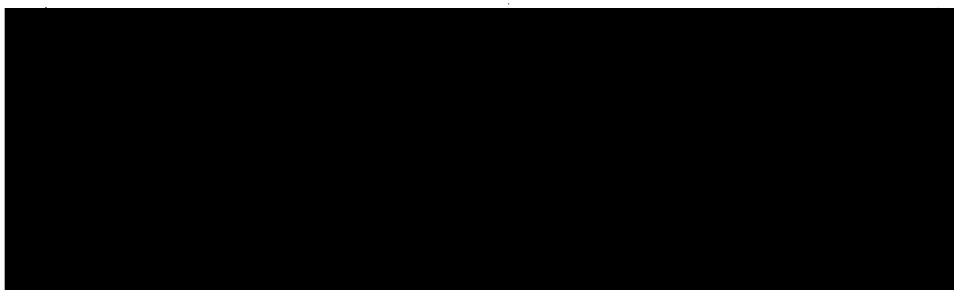
8 A There was a police car outside at the time that we  
9 arrived.

10 Q Okay. Do you know if that vehicle was manned when  
11 you arrived?

12 A I believe it was manned because if I remember  
13 correctly, the lights were on.

14 Q Okay. So, approximately how long did you stay at  
15 the Mission Compound before making another movement?

16 A I can't say exactly. I want to say about an hour,  
17 maybe an hour and a half. It was possibly less.



24 Q Okay. Was there anything else that struck you  
25 about the compound other than the size and the minimal guard

1 presence?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. So, you said you were there about an hour,  
4 and then you made a movement. Where did you go?

5 A We went to the Annex.

6 Q Okay. So here on the schedule it says 1400  
7 briefing, [REDACTED]?

8 A Yes.  
[REDACTED]

10 A Yes.

11 Q It says location, U.S. Special Mission Benghazi?

12 A Yes.

13 Q That's what the schedule says, but you said you  
14 went to the Annex?

15 A We went to the Annex.

16 Q Okay. And did you know you were going to the  
17 Annex, or did that come as a surprise to you?

18 A No. When we got there they briefed us that we were  
19 going to be making a movement to the Annex. I believe that  
20 came up because some of the contract security folks at the  
21 Annex were going to support us for the movement that night,  
22 and then the chief of station wanted to have a brief with the  
23 Ambassador, so just the decision was made to have everything  
24 over there and then depart for the council meeting.

25 Q Okay. So, who went to the Annex with the

1 Ambassador?

2 A It was myself, [REDACTED]  
3 [REDACTED] the Ambassador, and I think there was a driver.

4 Q A locally employed driver?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Okay. And what weapons did you take with you over  
7 to the Annex, presumably your sidearm?

8 A Right. Well, I definitely took my pistol, and we  
9 did have our rifles with us, too.

10 Q And how long approximately was the trip to the  
11 Annex?

12 A Maybe 5 minutes.

13 Q And so, you arrived at the Annex. What happened  
14 next?

15 A So they took the, chief of station took the  
16 Ambassador downstairs for a brief, and then we were  
17 introduced to everybody else at the Annex. We were told what  
18 their functions were. We talked about, you know, we  
19 exchanged contact information. We talked about the plan for  
20 the council meeting that night. And they had agreed to  
21 support us for the remainder of the events as often as they  
22 could while we were there.

23 Q So, when you say they agreed to support us, who  
24 were you referring to?

25 A The Annex security team.

1           Q    Okay. Did the Ambassador, upon arriving at the  
2    Annex, did he go straight downstairs with the chief of  
3    station, or did he make any remarks beforehand?

4           A    I mean, there were general pleasantries. Everybody  
5    wanted to talk to the Ambassador and say hi. And then after  
6    that, the Ambassador went directly down to get his brief from  
7    the --

8           Q    So you said everybody wanted to say hi, but did the  
9    Ambassador himself say anything to the personnel there?

10          A    Yeah, general pleasantries from what I remember.  
11    It wasn't like he was --

12          Q    Okay. He didn't make a speech for a couple  
13    minutes?

14          A    No.

15          Q    Okay. All right. And it was just a couple minutes  
16    of general pleasantries?

17          A    If I'm remembering correctly, yes.

18          Q    Did you see the chief of station take the  
19    Ambassador downstairs?

20          A    Yeah. I mean, I saw them leave the room and go for  
21    --

22          Q    Did you see anybody else leave the room as well?

23          A    Not that I remember.

24          Q    Okay. Approximately how many people were present  
25    or in the room when you arrived at the Annex?

2 Q Okay. And did the makeup of individuals in the  
3 room strike you in any way?

4 A No.

5 Q Okay. All male, any female?

6 A There were women present.

7 Q Do you know how many women were present?

8 A Not that I remember offhand. Maybe one, maybe two.  
9 I can't remember.

10 Q Okay. So, do you know who else joined the  
11 Ambassador in the meeting with the chief of station? I'm  
12 sorry the chief of base?

13 A I don't know.

14 Q Okay. All right. And approximately how long did  
15 that meeting take place?

16 A I can't remember.

17 Q Okay. Do you know what the subject of that meeting  
18 was?

19 A No.

20 Q Okay. So, while the Ambassador and the chief of  
21 base were downstairs, you remained upstairs and talked with  
22 other individuals there?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And who did you talk with in particular, if you can  
25 remember?

1           A     I can't remember specifically. We talked to some  
2     of the contractors. I mean, I obviously talked to [REDACTED]  
3     [REDACTED] and then a couple of the other guys who were there.  
4     And, unfortunately most of the people that I remember it was  
5     just like nicknames that we would --

6           Q     So, when you say you talked with [REDACTED] obviously,  
7     why is that obvious to you that you talked with him?

[REDACTED]  
9     remember his last name, were with us the night at the  
10    Security Council meeting, and we spent a lot of time talking.

11           Mr. Davis. Okay. We have hit the one-hour mark, so  
12    we're going to stop and take a break.

13           Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

14           Ms. Sawyer. Carlton, since we have so many members  
15    here, we would be happy if they have sensitive questions, I  
16    know that sometimes the scheduling means they have to depart.  
17    We would be happy to, you know, have some time either at the  
18    beginning of the next hour, during the next hour. You know I  
19    certainly --

20           Mr. Davis. Why don't we give the witness a break, and  
21    we can talk with the members and see how they want to  
22    proceed. Is that okay?

23           Ms. Sawyer. Okay.

24           [Recess.]

25           Mr. Davis. We can go back on the record.

1           Mrs. Roby. Sir, thank you again for being here and for  
2           answering our questions. You mentioned when you got to the  
3           Annex that you were introduced to all of the people that were  
4           there.

5           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

6           Mrs. Roby. And you mentioned just a few minutes ago,  
7           that you were told of their function at the Annex.

8           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes. Specifically that was the  
9           contractors, the GRS contractors were there. We were  
10          introduced to everybody, but like I said, I don't  
11          specifically remember all the people's names exactly --

12          Mrs. Roby. Sure. I'm not as much interested in their  
13          names, although there are other people that probably are.  
14          But, I'm more interested in what you observed at the Annex,  
15          what the functions of the individuals, what they were doing  
16          at the Annex.

17          Mr. [REDACTED] So, my time at the Annex was very  
18          limited, and like, it was mostly like pleasant conversations,  
19          introductions, and my -- like, the most in-depth  
20          conversations I had was with the security people and that was  
21          specifically towards how they were going to be able to  
22          support us for the rest of the Ambassador's moves, either  
23          that night, for the rest of the trip.

24          Mrs. Roby. Did you have any understanding at any point  
25          in time of what was taking place at the Annex? What the --

1 Mr. [REDACTED] I'm sorry. As far as?

2 Mrs. Roby. I can be more clear. Did you know or have  
3 an understanding of why the Annex was there?

4 Mr. [REDACTED] No. I mean, I obviously knew that it was  
5 a CIA building, but for what, I wasn't privy to that.

6 Mrs. Roby. Okay. So, none of the conversations that  
7 you had at the time you were there prior to the Council  
8 meeting or at any other time while you were in Benghazi,  
9 there were no conversations about what the function of the  
10 Annex was, why it was in Benghazi, and why those people were  
11 there?

12 Mr. [REDACTED] No, no.

13 Mrs. Roby. Okay. Thank you.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. When you got to the airport, had you  
15 all gone over the route that you were going to take from the  
16 airport to the mission facility?

17 Mr. [REDACTED] No, we had not.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, that was laid out by  
19 somebody else?

20 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. The agents who, and since I  
21 wasn't there, I can't speak to exactly the planning process  
22 that they went through, but typically what would happen is  
23 you would plan primary and secondary routes from your  
24 location to your destination, and you would identify safe  
25 havens and routes should you need them.



1 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, you just got in the car.  
2 I mean, all this was already planned before you got there.

3 Mr. [REDACTED] Right.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. There was no discussion of it or  
5 anything --

6 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. Having not been familiar with  
7 Benghazi, like I wasn't in a position --

8 Mr. Westmoreland. You'd have probably got lost anyway.

9 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. Exactly.

10 Mr. Westmoreland. Well. Was this the first trip that  
11 the Ambassador had made to Benghazi.

12 Mr. [REDACTED] Not ever, but since he had been the  
13 Ambassador, yes.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. To that compound. I mean, he had  
15 been there before?

16 Mr. [REDACTED] He had been to, if I am remembering  
17 correctly, he had been to Benghazi before, and he had been to  
18 that compound before.

19 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. Were you informed at this  
20 meeting, the briefing that you were at, were you informed of  
21 any of the security arrangements, that had been done, with  
22 the 17th Brigade or Blue Mountain or the Annex?

23 Mr. [REDACTED] So I knew that Blue Mountain was the  
24 contract company that ran the guard for us. And then [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED] briefed us on a mutually supporting

1 arrangement that they had had with the contractors at the  
2 Annex, which they would support them should they need  
3 support. They would support us should we need support and  
4 that our primary call for support would be to the 17th  
5 Brigade.

6 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, they gave you that number  
7 and said, here's the number to call if --

8 Mr. [REDACTED] If I'm remembering correctly, it was a  
9 radio and not a number, but I can't remember.

10 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, they had the same radio --  
11 they were on the same frequency as your radios?

12 Mr. [REDACTED] There was a method to communicate with  
13 the 17th Brigade and the TOC. We didn't share the same radio  
14 and the same frequency on a regular basis.

15 Mr. Westmoreland. So, if you had been out with the  
16 Ambassador and had a need to call the 17th Brigade for this  
17 assistance, somebody there would have been able to do that?

18 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. I would have radioed the TOC, and  
19 then the TOC would you have radioed them.

20 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, you wouldn't have had  
21 direct communication?

22 Mr. [REDACTED] No.

23 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, they would not have had  
24 access to your frequency, but they would have to the TOC's  
25 frequency?

14 Q Good morning, Mr. [REDACTED]. My name again is  
15 Heather Sawyer. I'm with the minority members of the Select  
16 Committee. I have with me today two colleagues, Peter Kenny  
17 and Kendal Robinson. The Ranking Member, Mr. Cummings, is  
18 hoping to be able to come by and speak with you as well. He  
19 had a hearing this morning. I'm not sure when that will  
20 conclude, but I think he is hoping to come in and have a  
21 chance to talk with you as well. You know again, we  
22 appreciate you taking the time to come in and talk to the  
23 committee. We understand that you've already spoken with the  
24 Accountability Review Board and the FBI and the Department of  
25 Justice about the attacks and your experience in Libya prior

1 to the attacks. So, we appreciate your willingness also to  
2 come in and share your experience with us.

3 I'm going to try to just touch on a few of the things  
4 that you have already discussed just with a little bit of  
5 follow-up and just continue and pick up where we were and  
6 talking about what was happening in Benghazi.

7 So, one thing I was curious, you had indicated that you  
8 had 7 and a half years experience. You had been in the Army  
9 for 7 and a half years?

10 A Yes.

11 Q Can you share with us a little bit about where you  
12 were deployed if you were deployed?

13 A Yeah. So, I originally enlisted in the Army.  
14 After about two years I went to OCS. Most of my time in the  
15 Army was spent as an officer. I was an artillery officer. I  
16 was deployed for a year just outside of Tikrit in 2003 to  
17 2004. And then I did another year in the Diyala Province in  
18 2009, 2010. In between that was OCS and a variety of  
19 schools.

20 Q And those two provinces that you just mentioned are  
21 in Iraq?

22 A Yes.

23 Q And were you in active combat zones during that  
24 time?

25 A Yeah. I mean, all of Iraq was a combat zone at

1       that time, so yeah.

2           Q     You mentioned that your sense, both before and when  
3     you got on the ground in Tripoli, I think, was that Tripoli  
4     could be a dangerous place, but there was nothing specific  
5     about the threats that was targeting Americans or American  
6     interests. Did that remain true the entire time that you had  
7     been in Tripoli before you went to Benghazi?

8           A     Yes.

9           Q     And what, if any, sense did you have about that  
10    dynamic in Benghazi?

11          A     Generally, I think at the time that it was the same  
12    with respect to specific targets towards Americans. However,  
13    the threat of militia-on-militia violence was higher, because  
14    it was away from the centralized government, and generally my  
15    impression was it was generally more politically unstable.

16          Q     So, is it fair to say that your sense of it was  
17    that the overall threat environment in Benghazi was more  
18    tenuous than Tripoli but still no specific targeting of  
19    Americans or American interests?

20          A     That's a safe statement.

21          Q     During the first hour you had mentioned that during  
22    your time in Tripoli there had been, to your recollection,  
23    one instance where there had been some warning of a potential  
24    protest in Tripoli. Do you recall approximately when that  
25    happened?

1           A    I can't remember the dates specifically. I would  
2   say maybe two weeks before we left for Benghazi perhaps.

3           Q    So, approximately late August, early September?  
4   Does that seem about right?

5           A    That sounds about right.

6           Q    And do you have a recollection as to whether or not  
7   that was related to the September 1, and the 1st of September  
8   is the anniversary of General Qadhafi's Green Revolution from  
9   the 1960s. Do you recall if the protest had any relation to  
10   that?

11          A    I don't.

12          Q    And stepping back just for a moment, can you  
13   explain to us from a security perspective what is the risk  
14   associated with a protest?

15          A    Well, there are several risks. One is that you  
16   have got a large number of unknown people coming. And if it  
17   is organized and non-violent, there is typically not a  
18   problem. But when you get a bunch of people with no vetting,  
19   no -- you know, you don't know why they're going to be there,  
20   there is always the potential for something to elevate, and  
21   also depending on the cause, people have an emotional  
22   investment in it, and when emotions flare, sometimes  
23   situations can bubble over.

24          Q    So, one of the risks is the potential that some of  
25   the people at least, or some element of a protest, could turn

1 violent?

2 A Yes.

3 Q And do you recall, it sounds like probably not, but  
4 do you recall hearing what the cause or the reason for that  
5 particular protest was?

6 A No.

7 Q Did you ever recall hearing that it was in any way  
8 an anti-American protest, or targeting Americans?

9 A No.

10 Q And, do you recall any particular security steps  
11 that you all took when you got that threat, again in Tripoli?

12 A In Tripoli I remember the DCM had an all-hands  
13 meeting where he briefed everybody at the Embassy about the  
14 threat. And then we reminded everybody that if need be and  
15 we needed to evacuate, we would evacuate and we discussed  
16 where we would go.

17 Q And did you feel comfortable with that plan, that  
18 that plan was adequate to address that particular threat?

19 A Yes, for the threat of a protest, yes.

20 Q And do you know whether or not Benghazi had a  
21 similar threat about a protest around that same time or any  
22 other time while you were stationed in Libya?

23 A The day of the attacks we got a general brief from  
24 one of the guys -- I can't remember specifically who -- from  
25 the Annex that there was the same general, non-specific

1 threat in Benghazi, not targeted towards Americans and not  
2 specific.

3 Q And, was that a threat of a protest?

4 A No. It was just a general, non-specific threat.

5 Q And, what was the, to the extent you can be more  
6 specific or recall more of the specifics of that, what type  
7 of threat were you being warned about?

8 A So, this is kind of the thing that's a little  
9 annoying about threat information, is you will get a phone  
10 call that says, hey, we have a general, non-specific threat,  
11 not targeted towards Americans, but we just want you to be  
12 aware; so that's what we got that day.

13 Q And are they able to indicate in those kinds of  
14 warnings whether it's a threat that there might be an attack  
15 with an explosive device or an RPG or gunfire or anything of  
16 the kind of type of instrumentality as it were?

17 A No, because that would go into the more of a  
18 specific threat, and that's not what we were warned about  
19 there.

20 Q And then turning to the pre-trip plannings while  
21 you were still in Tripoli, you had talked a little bit about  
22 that during the last hour, and you had been shown a couple of  
23 exhibits, Exhibit 2, that related to a meeting that you  
24 talked about having. You had noted that the deputy chief of  
25 mission would have been in that brief. Who was the deputy



1 chief of mission at that time?

2 A Hicks. I'm blanking on his first name. Gregory  
3 Hicks.

4 Q And, you indicated that you believed, or it seemed  
5 most certain that someone from the -- I don't know if they  
6 called it the Annex as well in Tripoli?

7 A [REDACTED]

8 Q [REDACTED]

9 A Yes.

10 Q Okay. Would have been there. Do you recall from  
11 that meeting whether or not, did anyone participate by  
12 telephone, or was this an all in-person meeting?

13 A I believe [REDACTED] might have participated  
14 by telephone.

15 Q And [REDACTED] at that point in time was  
16 stationed in Benghazi?

17 A He had gone to Benghazi for a week, maybe two,  
18 before.

19 Q And, do you recall during that meeting anyone  
20 recommending that the Ambassador not travel to Benghazi, and  
21 I think at that point it was scheduled for the 10th. Right?

22 A Right. I do not remember that. I don't remember  
23 anybody suggesting that he not travel at that meeting. No.

24 Q Did anyone have any particular security-related  
25 concerns that were expressed?

1           A     Being from the RSO Section, we were concerned about  
2     exposure to press. We wanted to keep the Ambassador's  
3     visibility in Benghazi limited, and we asked him, and he  
4     acquiesced, to stay on the compound as much as possible and  
5     not have press present until, I think it was the last day.

6           Q     Given the timing of that trip, scheduled for the  
7     10th, and I believe, and I think it's true based on the  
8     schedule, plan to return on the 14th of September, he was  
9     going to be there on September 11 of 2012?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     And September 11, of course, is the anniversary of  
12     terror attacks in the United States. Was there any  
13     discussion of whether or not that anniversary, the 9/11  
14     anniversary, posed a security risk for the Ambassador?

15          A     At that meeting?

16          Q     Well, first at that meeting, yes.

17          A     No. That's my recollection.

18          Q     And did it come up any other time?

19          A     Not in my presence, no.

20          Q     Are you aware that it came up at a different time  
21     when you weren't present?

22          A     No, I don't. I would have no idea, although it is  
23     something that the RSO almost certainly -- a discussion that  
24     he would have had with the Ambassador.

25          Q     And when you're mentioning the RSO there, which RSO

1 are you --

2 A [REDACTED]

3 Q [REDACTED] in Tripoli?

4 A Yes.

5 Q So, if that conversation were to occur, you believe  
6 it would be more likely between Mr. [REDACTED] and the  
7 Ambassador?

8 A Yes, but, again, I have no direct knowledge of any  
9 conversation they had about that.

10 Q So it's possible that they didn't discuss it, and  
11 you certainly didn't hear anything that anyone had discussed  
12 that?

13 A Correct.

14 Q You had indicated that one of the security  
15 recommendations that was made to the Ambassador with regard  
16 to his trip to Benghazi was to limit as much as possible  
17 off-compound moves, and you said he was amenable to that.  
18 I'm looking at the schedule, and I'm going to just point you  
19 to Exhibit 3, which we talked about a little bit in the last  
20 hour. It does appear that some of the meetings would have  
21 occurred off compound, so it looks, for example, as if two  
22 meetings on that very first day, the 10th, would have taken  
23 place -- well, three in the end because I think he went, as  
24 you explained, to the Annex as well?

25 A Well, there were, to be clear, he went from the

1       airport to the Special Mission to the Annex, to the Council  
2       meetings back to the Special Mission.

3       Q     Okay. So, some were planned off compound and  
4       otherwise minimized. With regard to the ones that were off  
5       compound, were you involved? Do you know if there was any  
6       particular assessment as to why those ones would be, you  
7       know, more permissible, acceptable?

8       A     Well, so again, balancing security with diplomacy,  
9       it's a balancing act, so, he can't stay on the compound the  
10      entire time, so he needed to get out. With that in mind,  
11      there was one move to the Council meeting, and he would stay  
12      at that very same location, have dinner. He agreed that he  
13      would stay on compound the entire next day, and the original  
14      plan was to have those meetings that he had on the compound  
15      out in the city. So, we changed all of those, and we  
16      significantly limited the amount of time that he would be out  
17      in the city.

18      Q     While you were answering that, you indicated that,  
19      you know, the Ambassador cannot stay on the compound the  
20      entire time. What was your sense, even from the diplomatic  
21      security perspective, as to what the value or importance or  
22      need to actually be off compound would be for an Ambassador  
23      or someone carrying out diplomacy?

24      A     Generally, you know, diplomacy is important and to  
25      do their jobs, they need to interact with the people. Now,

1     our job is to make sure that they do that in as safe an  
2     environment as possible. And when presented with the  
3     Ambassador's schedule, we make recommendations to make these  
4     things as safe as possible. And at the end the Ambassador  
5     considered and accepted a lot of the recommendations that  
6     were made.

7           Q     So, it sounds like one of the early meetings that  
8     you did have when you had arrived in Benghazi -- now moving  
9     ahead to that -- was at the Annex, with the Annex personnel.  
10    And you talked a bit about that, and you had indicated that  
11    there was a meeting between the chief of base and the  
12    Ambassador, but that from your recollection, that had just  
13    been as between the two of them. Is that accurate?

14          A     Yes. You're speaking specifically of when we  
15    arrived in Benghazi? Yes.

16          Q     Yes.

17          A     I don't know. There is a possibility that other  
18    people were in the meeting, but I don't know.

19          Q     And after that meeting, did the Ambassador raise  
20    with you any concerns that the chief of base had relayed to  
21    him about security matters in Benghazi?

22          A     No.

23          Q     Did he seem concerned coming out of the meeting in  
24    any way or troubled?

25          A     No.

1           Q     Would you have expected, and I know that you  
2     indicated earlier you didn't have a ton of interaction with  
3     the Ambassador, but based on what you did know about him and  
4     what you have said about his certainly willingness to hear  
5     what Diplomatic Security had to offer in terms of their  
6     assessment of risk concerns and mitigating risk, would you  
7     have expected him to share with either you or someone else on  
8     the DS team had he been concerned after that meeting?

9           A     Yes. I would have expected if there was a specific  
10    threat targeting the Ambassador or Americans in Benghazi,  
11    that the Ambassador after having been briefed would have  
12    briefed us, and also the members from the Annex would have  
13    briefed us as well.

14          Q     And that didn't ever happen. They didn't brief you  
15    about specific threats against Americans or --

16          A     No. The day before the attacks, maybe the  
17    afternoon of the attacks, they came and told us the general,  
18    hey, we have got non-specific threat information, and that  
19    was the only brief that we had.

20          Q     And when they conveyed that information or at any  
21    other time, did they talk to you about particular security  
22    steps that you might consider taking in light of either the  
23    existing or that specific threat?

24          A     No.

25          Q     And was there any conversation with personnel at

1 the Annex about the fact that the anniversary of the 9/11  
2 terror attacks would be taking place while the Ambassador was  
3 in Benghazi?

4 A None that took place in my presence.

5 Q So, I'm going to have you talk with us a little  
6 bit, well, probably a lot, about, you know, September 11, the  
7 actual day of and the night of the attacks.

8 A Okay.

9 Q What I'd like to do is really just give you the  
10 opportunity to walk us through that. But as we go into it I  
11 want -- I know you spoke with the ARB. I don't know if  
12 you've had the opportunity to read the ARB report at any  
13 point?

14 A When the unclassified version came out and was on  
15 the internet, I just glanced at it. I didn't read the whole  
16 thing.

17 Q Well, I want you to know that we have read it. We  
18 have read the classified and the unclassified. We have also  
19 read, you know, the State Department, despite its concerns  
20 about, you know, kind of the potential negative impact going  
21 forward on ARB's abilities to do their job, have accommodated  
22 the request also to see the notes of individuals interviewed  
23 by the ARB. And certainly while that report was critical in  
24 many respects, about security-related matters in Benghazi,  
25 the one thing that was absolutely clear, and I hope that you

1 did at least read far enough in the report to see how  
2 complimentary and grateful the ARB was for the work that you  
3 and your team did on the ground. So, certainly as we go into  
4 this, I know that it's potentially a difficult thing to talk  
5 about, but I want you to know that everyone on the committee  
6 also appreciates and fully understands that.

7 So, starting first just with a little bit earlier in the  
8 day and then the night, was there anything that happened that  
9 day that raised concerns from a security perspective?

10 A Yeah. At some point in the morning, I think it was  
11 [REDACTED] noticed that there was somebody in a position to  
12 have an over-watch position that gave them a vantage point to  
13 look down inside of the compound.

14 Q And what was done in response to that?

15 A [REDACTED] was in the process of drafting a letter to the  
16 MFA, again asserting that we need a local police presence and  
17 asking them, because if I remember correctly, the person was  
18 in a police car, and it was just pursuing it to that end.

19 Q And when you say MFA, is that the Ministry of  
20 Foreign Affairs?

21 A Yes.

22 Q And do you know the status of that letter? Did  
23 that letter get sent?

24 A I don't know. I know that [REDACTED] worked on it. I  
25 know that at one point he talked about having the Ambassador



1 take a look at it to make his changes, but I'm not sure of  
2 the status at the end.

3 Q In addition to the drafting of that note, was there  
4 any discussion of potential measures being taken inside the  
5 compound or otherwise with regard to the security presence in  
6 the compound to address that?

7 A No. We talked about it, and we talked about being  
8 mindful to see if we saw anybody else trying to go up there,  
9 if there was anything else that stood out during the day, or  
10 was this just a one-time event. So, there was no -- to my  
11 knowledge, there was nothing to change about the actual  
12 physical security or guard posting of the Embassy in reaction  
13 to that, or the Special Mission.

14 Q And were you comfortable with that resolution and  
15 that decision with regard to the specific, you know, instance  
16 where there had been some noticed potential surveillance?

17 A Without any other indicators, the letter to the MFA  
18 seemed sufficient to me, also just being a little more  
19 mindful to see if there was anything else that stood out in  
20 the area.

21 Q And on the 11th, the schedule indicates, and I  
22 think it may have come up last hour, that the plan was to not  
23 have meetings off compound?

24 A Yes.

25 Q And was that the case? Were all the meetings held

1 on compound?

2 A Yes. There was one move in the morning, and they  
3 took [REDACTED] to the airport.

4 Q And he was scheduled before that day to be flying  
5 out that day?

6 A Yes.

7 Q So, that was in keeping with the prescheduled plan?  
8 He didn't leave for any reason related to --

9 A No.

10 Q And do you recall, I mean, did all of those  
11 meetings from your perspective, did anything come up during  
12 those meetings that raised concerns from a security  
13 standpoint?

14 A No. I had talked to, sporadically through the day,  
15 I had seen the Ambassador and we talked to him. We were  
16 trying to lock in all the details for his meetings the  
17 following day, and at no point did he express concern or say  
18 he had heard something in his meeting that would cause us to  
19 change our plan or do anything differently.

20 Q Did you hear at any point during the day at some  
21 time about a protest in Cairo?

22 A Yes. I can't remember exactly when, but I was made  
23 aware of the protest in Cairo, and the Ambassador had asked  
24 about it.

25 Q And were you actually in a conversation with the

1 Ambassador?

2 A I was in a conversation with the Ambassador when he  
3 said, hey, something's going on in Cairo; and he asked me if  
4 I would be able to find out some more information about it  
5 for him.

6 Q And were you able to?

7 A I made phone calls to the command center, in D.C.  
8 but there was no other information that I received other than  
9 that there was a protest, and they were actually in the  
10 process of evaluating that situation.

11 Q And do you recall who it is you spoke with?

12 A I can't say specifically who I spoke with at that  
13 time. Throughout the course of the night, I did talk to  
14 another agent at the command center named [REDACTED] but  
15 --

16 Q And earlier in the day when you were having the  
17 conversation with the command center in D.C. about what was  
18 going on in Cairo, were they able to give you any specific  
19 information about what triggered the protest?

20 A No.

21 Q Did they have any information about whether the  
22 protest had in any way become a threat to personnel on the  
23 ground in Cairo?

24 A No. What I knew about Cairo, and it's hard now  
25 2-plus years later to remember what I knew at the time versus

1        what I now know or shortly after. But, I think there was  
2        some open-source reporting that was going on at the time as  
3        well. So, if I am remembering correctly, I didn't get a ton  
4        of detailed information.

5            Q     When you say there was also open-source reporting?

6            A     The news.

7            Q     The news. Okay. And what was the news reporting  
8        about it?

9            A     I can't remember specifically. And, again, it's  
10       hard to tell 2-plus years later what I knew like the 10th  
11       versus the 13th or the 14th when I was in Germany.

12          Q     And do you recall following back up with the  
13       Ambassador, you had gathered the information that you could,  
14       and relaying that to him?

15          A     If I remember correctly, I told him that I would  
16       look into it and I would brief him in the morning, and he was  
17       fine with that.

18          Q     And did you have discussions with any of the other  
19       members of the DS security team about the protests in Cairo?

20          A     I can't remember specific conversations about that.

21          Q     And do you remember any conversations about whether  
22       or not, either because of what the Ambassador had been  
23       hearing and asked you to follow-up on, or any other reasons  
24       of potentially changing anything about the security setup for  
25       that evening?

1           A     No, no I -- no, I can't think of any changes that  
2     we talked about making or made based on that.

3           Q     And do you know how the Ambassador learned of the  
4     protest?

5           A     I don't know. I can't say specifically how he  
6     found out about it.

7           Q     Okay. So, moving forward through the day, if you  
8     would not mind just kind of just walking us through, and I'll  
9     ask you some questions along the way probably.

10          A     Okay.

11          Q     If you just would, you know, kind of start walking  
12     us through the onset of the attack, you know, just starting  
13     with kind of where you were and how you first became aware?

14          A     Okay. We were in. And excuse me, I think it's  
15     Villa C is what it has been labeled as. It was the living  
16     area of the Ambassador. I was outside with [REDACTED],  
17     [REDACTED] and myself. [REDACTED] was inside. And I think we  
18     had all, we were just going to all kind of stay up and talk.  
19     We all went to the Academy together. We hadn't seen each  
20     other for a while, so we were just catching up on families  
21     and things of that nature.

22          A     At a certain point we started to hear some noise, which  
23     at that time didn't really stand out, but it started to get  
24     louder. It seemed like it was getting closer. And then at  
25     one point I remember hearing like what I would describe as

1 kind of an explosion or loud crash or something. And at that  
2 point everybody went to react. Specifically I went from C  
3 down to the TOC to try to secure the Ambassador because  
4 that's the last place I had remembered seeing him. When I  
5 realized that he wasn't there, I moved across the cantina to  
6 secure my body armor and my M-4. While I was in there,  
7 another agent, [REDACTED] came in. We decided that we would  
8 move back together once he secured his equipment to Villa C  
9 to secure the Ambassador. By the time he secured his  
10 equipment and we went to move out, we left the cantina. We  
11 turned the corner essentially, and there was a large number  
12 of armed Libyans. And we made the decision to go back into  
13 the cantina, lock the door, and barricade ourselves in a  
14 room. At that time there was a local guard member who was in  
15 there with us. Once we were in the room, [REDACTED] started making  
16 phone calls to the command center to apprise them of the  
17 situation, and I started calling the TOC in Tripoli to inform  
18 them of what was going on.

19 Generally, not too long after that, we heard the people  
20 make entry into the cantina where we were at. And throughout  
21 that period of time, we were trying to radio coms with the  
22 TOC, communicating to the TOC where we were, so we could have  
23 a rough estimate of where the Americans were on the compound  
24 and relay that information off to both Washington, to  
25 Tripoli, and allowing [REDACTED] to relay that information off to

1 either 17th Brigade and the Annex for support.

2 At, I can't remember exactly when it was, but at a  
3 certain point I heard on the radio, we heard that they had  
4 started setting fires, and at one point we heard [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED] say that the building was on fire and that he was  
6 being shot at. Shortly thereafter, once it looked like  
7 things were clear, [REDACTED] said that he was coming over.  
8 We came together, and we talked about, we very quickly talked  
9 out a plan on how we could get from where we were over to  
10 Villa C to secure [REDACTED], the Ambassador and [REDACTED]. We decided  
11 that we would take one of the up-armored vehicles and  
12 essentially drive it up to the door, and then we would make  
13 entry into the house and try to secure everybody.

14 By the time we got there, the building was on fire.  
15 There was lots of smoke. We were able to find [REDACTED]  
16 relatively quickly. We put him back in, and then through the  
17 field there were a large number of armed Libyans coming in,  
18 but one of the GRS contractors stood out. Once we identified  
19 that was a friendly force, then we reported the location of  
20 the Americans that we had accountability of to the TOC, and  
21 then we started trying to make entry into the building to  
22 secure both the Ambassador and Sean.

23 Several attempts were made to go in, but the smoke was  
24 really bad, so not a lot, we couldn't make it very far into  
25 the building. At one point we drove back to the TOC to try

1 to get some gas masks to go in. By the time we got back,  
2 [REDACTED] had gone through with [REDACTED], and they were in the  
3 building, and they found [REDACTED], which they passed  
4 out of a window to me and one of the GRS members. I took  
5 [REDACTED] pulse. He wasn't breathing. There was no obvious  
6 signs of life, so we continued to go and try to secure the  
7 Ambassador.

8 After, I can't even remember how long it was, one of  
9 the, a couple of the Libyan militia who were there started to  
10 get increasingly more agitated that we were still there; and  
11 at one point they grabbed one of the Annex interpreters and  
12 told him that we needed to leave now because more people were  
13 coming, and they wouldn't be able to -- like they wouldn't be  
14 able to fight them off.

15 So, we tried to -- given the amount of time that we had  
16 spent going back and forth into the building and the level of  
17 difficulty that we were having breathing just trying to make  
18 entry in, we had accountability of all the Americans. We  
19 consolidated outside of Villa C. We retrieved the body of  
20 Sean. We loaded it up, and then we made the decision to  
21 leave in two groups to the Annex. The decision was made that  
22 we would leave first and the Annex team would stay behind to  
23 cover us while we left. We pulled outside of the Special  
24 Mission. We turned right down the street. As we were  
25 driving down the alley, it looked as if the road was blocked,



1       so we turned around to try to egress out of the back end of  
2       the street. But, again, that was blocked, so we had talked  
3       very briefly about just going back into the compound and  
4       going through the compound out to the gate that opened onto  
5       the street. But as we tried to do that, there was a Libyan  
6       who was trying to wave us in, and he came up to the door,  
7       tried to open it. When the door did not open, he shot the  
8       window of the car with his AK-47, and at that point we  
9       decided that we needed to go down the street. And if we  
10      needed to ram pass the vehicle, we would ram pass the  
11      vehicle. When we got there, there was just enough space for  
12      us to get through, and we turned onto the street, and then we  
13      proceeded to drive from there to the Annex.

14           Q     Okay. Thank you for that. I'm going to ask you a  
15      few just follow-up questions to get a few more details but  
16      what you've told us was very helpful. And then I may just  
17      have a few questions about the time at the Annex.

18           So, you had indicated that you went to, I think you  
19      called it the cantina, to get your body armor?

20           A     Yes.

21           Q     Were you staying, is that where your --

22           A     Yes, that's where my quarters were located.

23           Q     Were your weapons and body armor in your  
24      residential?

25           A     It was common practice to always have your sidearm

1 with you, but we wouldn't carry our rifles with us on  
2 compound, so our rifles are locked in our living quarters.

3 Q So, going back to the cantina allowed you to both  
4 get your body armor and the additional --

5 A M-4.

6 Q M-4. You then said that, you know, you and [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED], who has talked to the committee as well, then tried to  
8 move to Villa C?

9 A Yes.

10 Q And at that point in time when you came around the  
11 corner, you encountered a group, a large group you said, of  
12 armed Libyans?

13 A Yes.

14 Q At that point in time, what was your understanding  
15 as to the location of the Ambassador?

16 A Well, through process of elimination he had to be  
17 in Villa C. We had gone to the cantina. We were in the  
18 cantina, and he wasn't there. We had gone to his office and  
19 the TOC and he wasn't there. The only other building he  
20 could have been in was Villa C, so we decided to make  
21 movement down to Villa C.

22

23

24

25

1 [12:09 p.m.]

2 BY MS. SAWYER:

3 Q And at that point you decided not to engage in, you  
4 know --

5 A Yes.

6 Q -- exchange gunfire with the group of armed  
7 attackers?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Why was that decision made?

10 A So I don't know how familiar you are with gun  
11 fights, but if -- it is just, from my experience, we were  
12 vastly outnumbered. Your first inclination when somebody  
13 points a gun at you is to point a gun at them, and given  
14 those odds, we wouldn't have won that gunfight.

15 Q And if you had not won that gunfight, if you had  
16 started that engagement, what was the risk, beyond the  
17 obvious risk to you -- the two of you -- what would have been  
18 the overall impact on the remaining personnel on the mission?

19 A So I really don't want to speculate on what could  
20 have happened. So --

21 Q Fair enough. I will not ask you to do so.

22 So the two of you returned to the cantina, and you said  
23 you barricaded in. Was that part of your understanding of  
24 kind of the reaction plan in the event of an attack on the  
25 compound?

1           A    Yes. And then it keeps with training and practices  
2           of DS. We moved to the most secure location that we had,  
3           which would give us the maximum amount of time to come up  
4           with a reaction plan.

5           Q    And during that time, you -- and I think you had  
6           said that you were calling the TOC in Tripoli?

7           A    Yes.

8           Q    And what information did you convey to them?

9           A    I talked to ██████████ in Tripoli, and I told  
10          him that we were being overrun. Given his reaction, I think  
11          that this was the first time that he had been hearing about  
12          it, so we spent a couple of minutes going over, this is where  
13          we are and this is what is going on, this is not a joke, this  
14          is serious, like, the accountability of Americans, what is  
15          going on.

16          Q    And when you use the term "accountability" --

17          A    Yes.

18          Q    -- what does that term in that context mean?

19          A    It means you need to be aware of the number of  
20          Americans on the compound and then where they are. So, for  
21          example, at that particular point in time I could relay to  
22          ██████ that both ████████ and I were located presently in the  
23          cantina, and being in the TOC, ██████ would -- I mean, ██████  
24          would be able to say, all right, I know that I have two  
25          Americans, two of six in the cantina. I am here. I have

1 accountability of three of three. I am still missing X  
2 number of people.

3 Q And when you were on the phone with Mr. [REDACTED] in  
4 Tripoli, did he give you any information back? Did he say  
5 anything about an expected response from anyone to come in  
6 aid of you?

7 A No.

8 Q Did you expect him to be providing you that  
9 information?

10 A No.

11 Q And why wouldn't you have expected to get that  
12 information?

13 A Because we were on the ground. Tripoli is a  
14 45-minute plane ride away. Who knows how long by ground. So  
15 we were -- at least I was expecting our support clauses to  
16 kick in with 17th Brigade and/or the Annex.

17 Q So your expectation was the -- I am going to use  
18 the term Quick Reaction Force. I have heard it from other  
19 witnesses.

20 A That is fine.

21 Q But that the local reaction support would be  
22 coming.

23 A Yes.

24 Q And from your perspective and your understanding,  
25 that would come from both the February 17th Brigade and you

1 mentioned also the Annex?

2 A Yes.

3 Q And were you the person or were you involved in any  
4 of the efforts to get those two reaction force elements to  
5 assist?

6 A No. That all came through the TOC. [REDACTED] had  
7 related to us that he had made the phone calls, that they  
8 were made aware of the situation, and that they were  
9 making -- they were en route, as it were.

10 Q And [REDACTED] at the time -- and I apologize if I asked  
11 you this already -- he was -- [REDACTED] --

12 A Yes.

13 Q -- was the RSO in Benghazi?

14 A Yes.

15 Q So as the RSO, just like you described for us about  
16 [REDACTED], was he the kind of lead of the DS team in  
17 Benghazi?

18 A Yes, he was. And specifically in that context it  
19 would have deferred to whoever was in the TOC because they  
20 had the most command and control elements at their disposal.

21 Q And on that night is that how it generally  
22 operated? You said, you know, it sounds like that would be  
23 the normal, but did you feel like on the night of attack that  
24 that is how it unfolded, that you were able to communicate  
25 with [REDACTED] and follow his instruction?

1           A     Yeah. I mean, there was communication. It was a  
2     very fluid environment, so it is more like information is  
3     going in, the TOC is processing that information, relaying  
4     that information, I guess in this instance specifically to  
5     the Annex, calling to try to get status updates and maintain  
6     accountability of the personnel.

7           Q     And do you recall, when you were barricaded in the  
8     cantina and communicating, and you are with [REDACTED], and I  
9     think you said that [REDACTED], who we have spoken with, came  
10    over to the cantina, do you recall where he had been prior to  
11    that?

12          A     [REDACTED] had gone to the TOC. That was where his  
13    quarters were located. And like [REDACTED] and I, he had gone to  
14    the TOC to secure his M4 and his body armor.

15          Q     And when he came to the cantina, did he relay to  
16    you any specific information about the Ambassador and where  
17    the Ambassador was located?

18          A     No. He came to the TOC. He said that the building  
19    was on fire, that [REDACTED] was on the roof, he was being shot  
20    at. And he, from, you know, from his position, he didn't  
21    think that he could get back down unseen. So he was very  
22    intent on leaving to go up and provide aid.

23          Q     And did you have any sense -- so he -- your  
24    recollection was he relayed that to [REDACTED] -- and that is  
25    [REDACTED]

1           A     Yes.

2           Q     -- was on the roof.

3           A     Yes.

4           Q     Did you have any sense whether at that point in  
5 time [REDACTED] had with him either Mr. Smith or the Ambassador?

6           A     That was our first question, where the Ambassador  
7 was at. And if I am remembering correctly, [REDACTED] wasn't sure  
8 if the Ambassador was with [REDACTED] or not.

9           Q     And was this the first time you recall having any  
10 information that indicated that the Ambassador was not with  
11 Mr. [REDACTED] or one of the other DS agents?

12          A     So because I wasn't in the TOC, I do remember  
13 asking several times, hey, do we have accountability of the  
14 Ambassador? Where is the Ambassador? And if I am  
15 remembering correctly, we just got, he is with [REDACTED]. I know  
16 that there was a portion of time where [REDACTED] and the  
17 Ambassador and Sean were in the safe haven, and I think that  
18 information was relayed to us initially.

19          Q     Okay. And so upon hearing from Mr. [REDACTED] that he  
20 had heard from [REDACTED], who was on the roof and that, it sounds  
21 like, Mr. [REDACTED] said, you know, we need to get to the  
22 villa --

23          A     Yeah.

24          Q     -- the three of you then proceeded to take steps to  
25 do that pretty immediately?



1           A     Yes.

2           Q     So once you had a sense that there was not  
3           necessarily, as you put it, accountability for the  
4           Ambassador, the immediate reaction was to get over there and  
5           try to assist in any way you could?

6           A     Yeah. I mean, there are a couple things that need  
7           to happen. The term is "rush to failure." So you don't want  
8           to rush to failure. So you need to stop and you need to take  
9           a tactical pause and you need to come up with a feasible plan  
10          to get out there. Because running out and just becoming a  
11          victim would have done nobody any good.

12          So we stopped for a moment and we decided -- we came up  
13          very quickly with what seemed to us at the time to be the  
14          most feasible plan, which was leave the villa. So I leave  
15          the cantina, go back to the TOC, grab the keys to the  
16          up-armor and drive the up-armored vehicle up to the door of  
17          Villa C. And that was for two reasons. One, it provided us  
18          cover to get up to the villa. And two, it gave us an evac  
19          point to take Sean, [REDACTED], and the Ambassador once we found  
20          them.

21          Q     And once you had successfully gotten to Villa C,  
22          you indicated that you then began the effort to both, I  
23          think, locate probably Mr. [REDACTED] and then the others. So  
24          if you could just remind me a little bit of how that  
25          unfolded.

1           A     We were able to find [REDACTED] fairly quickly. He was  
2     on the roof. And once he knew that we were on the side, we  
3     were able to get him down from the roof, and then we started  
4     questioning him about the location of the Ambassador and  
5     Sean. Once we identified that they were still in the  
6     building, we started -- and also, about that time, is when  
7     we -- when 17th Brigade arrived and the Annex members  
8     arrived.

9           With the support and not immediately having to worry  
10    about any follow-on attacks, we decided to shift our focus to  
11    the recovery of the Ambassador and Sean. So that's what we  
12    did.

13          Q     When we spoke with Mr. [REDACTED] a little earlier, he  
14    explained to us and walked us through some of those  
15    efforts -- and you did a little bit too -- with regard to the  
16    difficulty in visibility and difficulty in entering and  
17    searching the building. And he talked to us, and the way he  
18    described it to us was, and at the point the decision was  
19    made that there should be an evacuation of the mission, he  
20    had indicated to us that at that point in time, from his  
21    perspective, it had changed from a rescue to a recovery  
22    mission. What was your perspective at that point, with  
23    regard to the Ambassador?

24          A     I had this conversation with the head of the GRS  
25    team, and he pulled me aside, and he asked me my thoughts of

1 the situation. As we started to stay at the special mission  
2 facility longer, and as the 17th Brigade started to get more  
3 and more agitated that we needed to leave, we talked about  
4 this. And it is a very difficult conversation to have, but  
5 we decided that just based on the amount of time that we had  
6 spent looking, the level of difficulty that we were having  
7 making it just 5 feet into the building, that it is likely  
8 that the Ambassador was dead and that we -- it was a -- we  
9 were going to recover a body instead of save a life.

10 Q And you indicated that some of the concerns, the  
11 initial level of concern about "we really need to evacuate"  
12 had been raised by the February 17th Brigade folks who had  
13 joined and arrived when the Annex team arrived.

14 A Right.

15 Q Do you recall kind of roughly the size of that  
16 contingent that came to assist?

17 A I can't speculate as to exactly how big they were.  
18 It was more than 15, maybe 20, but I can't say for sure.

19 Q So you talked about the challenges that you faced  
20 getting from the mission to the Annex.

21 A Yes.

22 Q I only have about 5 more minutes of my round of  
23 questioning with you, then my understanding is we will break  
24 for lunch. To the extent we can have you briefly describe  
25 for us in the remaining time what occurred once you got to

1 the Annex, that would be helpful, I think.

2 A Sure. Once we arrived at the Annex, [REDACTED] initially  
3 went to an overwatch position with the remainder of the GRS  
4 members on one building. [REDACTED] went to another building. And  
5 I went inside with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
6 [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED]

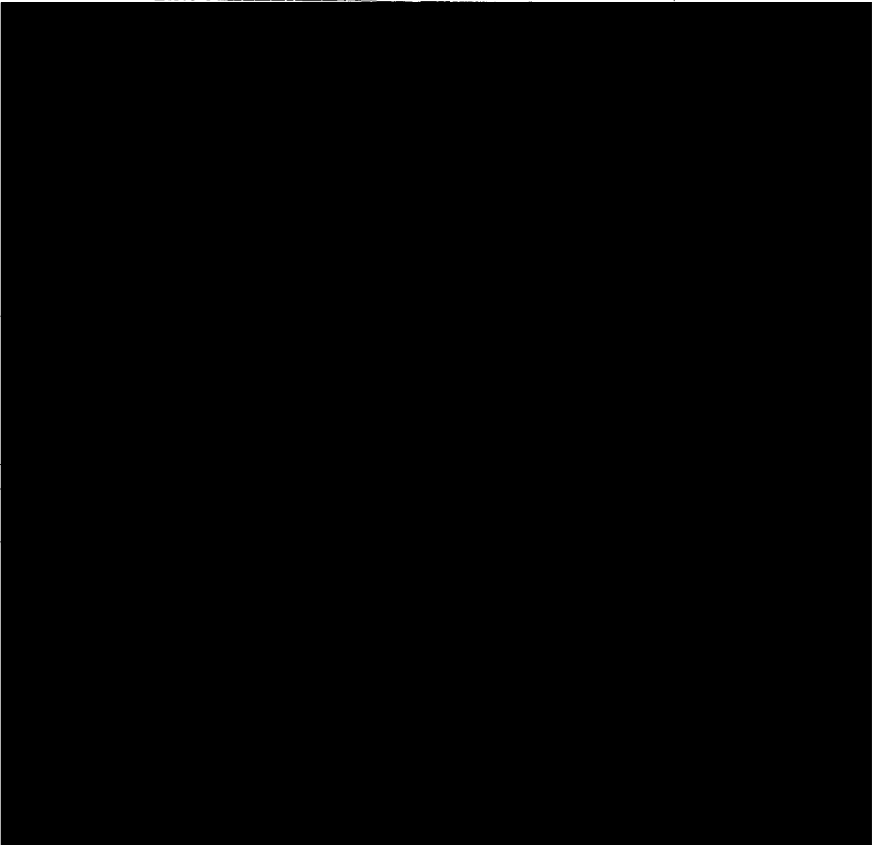
9 Maybe 5, maybe 10 minutes later, we got radio  
10 confirmation that the Annex team who was following us were  
11 coming back in, so I went out to the street to provide  
12 security so that they could come in. And after that, I  
13 replaced [REDACTED] on the roof of one of the buildings for  
14 the overwatch position, because he had cut himself when he  
15 was trying to crawl on the floor to get into the Villa C for  
16 the Ambassador.

17 I stayed on the roof of that building for the majority  
18 of the night. I made several phone calls back and forth to  
19 the DS Command Center in D.C. relaying information. I also  
20 made phone calls to one of the Ambassador's contacts to try  
21 to get some atmospherics about what was going on in the rest  
22 of the city, should we need to do a ground evac.

23 Sometime during the night we got information from a team  
24 that Tripoli was flying down. We got wheels-down  
25 confirmation. But it took them several hours to make it from

1 the airport to our location because of the -- because of what  
2 was going on in the city at the time. And then shortly after  
3 morning prayer is when the mortar attacks started.

4 Q Let me just ask you a couple questions in the  
5 remaining time I have. So you indicated that one of the



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21  
22  
23 So one of the things you said was you had several phone  
24 calls back and forth --

25 A Yes.

1 Q -- with the DS Command Center here in D.C.

2 A Uh-huh.

3 Q Can you just talk to -- is that -- you had  
4 mentioned a name earlier.

5 A [REDACTED]

6 Q And were those the conversations with [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Could you just, to the best of your recollection,  
10 share with us what information you shared with him, what  
11 information was shared back from him?

12 A Yeah. He wanted to know the status of the  
13 accountability of the Americans who were on post,  
14 specifically the Ambassador, what information we had. There  
15 were also additional reports coming in that the Ambassador  
16 might have been at a hospital in a burn unit and we were  
17 trying to verify the validity of those claims. And then just  
18 general situational awareness for the Command Center in D.C.

19 Q So your sense of kind of your -- what you were  
20 doing there was kind of giving an ongoing as things were  
21 unfolding so that they would have the information to help  
22 assess how to continue responding?

23 A Yes. My intent was to provide them the information  
24 that I had so they had timely information so they could make  
25 accurate decisions.

1 Q And did Mr. [REDACTED] give you information about  
2 anything with regard to either a response from Tripoli or a  
3 response from outside of Libya?

4 A No. The information from the Tripoli assets came  
5 from other people at the Annex that night.

6 Q Okay. So other communications that you were not  
7 involved in?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Did you talk with Mr. [REDACTED] or anyone else, either  
10 in Washington or on the ground really, that night about what  
11 had preceded the attacks and whether or not there had been a  
12 protest preceding the attacks?

13 A We did not talk about whether or not a protest  
14 started this or not, no.

15 Q And was that because you were focused more on kind  
16 of forward looking, what's happening now? Or was there a  
17 reason that you didn't discuss it?

18 A Mostly because, in my approximation, it didn't  
19 matter why it started. We were in the middle of the  
20 situation, and it needed to be resolved before we could go  
21 back and evaluate what happened.

22 Q All right. I think I have almost, if not  
23 exhausted -- I hear I have 3 minutes, but I fear that that  
24 will not be enough time. So we can go off the record.

25 [Recess.]

1 [1:21 p.m.]

2 BY MR. DAVIS:

3 Q So hopefully we'll be able to finish up our  
4 questioning at least this hour and it won't spill over, but  
5 we'll see. I want to backtrack a little bit to right after  
6 you got to Benghazi --

7 A Okay.

8 Q -- on September 10, and then we'll talk a little  
9 bit more about the 11th. We won't go into as much detail as  
10 you did with Heather about the attacks. She covered that  
11 pretty thoroughly. But there might be a couple points where  
12 we'll want to explore a little further.

13 My first question is in regards to when you arrived at  
14 the airport in Benghazi.

15 A Okay.

16 Q We had a discussion during the last hour about you  
17 receiving your weapons from Benghazi. When and where exactly  
18 did that take place?

19 A If I remember correctly, they had pistols for us  
20 when we landed at the airport, and then we got our rifles  
21 when we got to the compound.

22 Q Is that normal, based on your experience, to  
23 receive a weapon immediately as soon as you get off a plane?

24 A In an environment like that, yeah, you would want  
25 to be armed as soon as possible.



1 Q Okay. Going ahead about an hour or so in time, you  
2 mentioned you went to the compound and then you all took a  
3 trip over to the Annex. And I just wanted to ask again, who  
4 went with you over to the Annex in addition to you and the  
5 Ambassador?

6 A Again, if I'm remembering correctly, it was [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED] there was a driver, and the  
8 Ambassador.

9 Q Okay. And the driver -- there was nobody else, no  
10 other Libyan nationals, to the best of your knowledge?

11 A No, not that I remember.

12 Q And the driver, did remain in the vehicle at all  
13 times to the best of your knowledge, or what did he do?

14 A I can't remember what the driver did when we got  
15 there.

16 Q Okay. When you arrived at the Annex, did you have  
17 any observations or thoughts about the general security  
18 posture at the Annex?

19 A No.

20 Q Okay. Was it a smaller venue than the compound?

21 A Yes, it was significantly smaller.

22 Q And the amount of guards you saw, was it comparable  
23 to what they had at the compound, was it greater, or was it  
24 less?

25 A If I'm remembering correctly, it was less. Again,

1       it's a while ago. I think there was one -- they had one  
2       guard, one guard out there, but --

3           Q     When you say one guard, you mean local guard?

4           A     Yes.

5           Q     Yeah, okay.

6           We talked a little bit about the Ambassador's briefing  
7       with the chief of base where they had gone downstairs.

8           A     Uh-huh.

9           Q     You said you remained upstairs and talked with the  
10      Annex personnel. As a result of his briefing with the chief  
11      of base, were there any additional security measures or  
12      precautions that took place as a result of that briefing?

13          A     No.

14          Q     The following, day on September 11, all of his  
15      meetings were held on the compound. Is that right?

16          A     Yes.

17          Q     And was that originally planned to have all of his  
18      meetings on the compound that day or did that occur as a  
19      result of his briefing?

20          A     No, it was originally planned.

21          Q     Okay. Originally planned back when you were in  
22      Tripoli, as you remember?

23          A     Yes.

24          Q     Okay. So after you left the Annex -- well, let me  
25      ask, when the meeting with the chief of base ended between

1 the Ambassador and chief of base, did you linger at the Annex  
2 or what were the next steps the Ambassador took?

3 A I think he stayed there for maybe 30 to 45 minutes  
4 more, if I'm remembering correctly, while everybody prepped  
5 to move over to the council meeting.

6 Q What did everybody do during those 30 or  
7 45 minutes?

8 A They had a small cafeteria, so some people ate, I  
9 think watched some TV, talked about the move. That is about  
10 it.

11 Q I'm sorry, was this during the Ambassador's  
12 briefing or was this after the Ambassador's briefing?

13 A You know what, it might have been during and just  
14 after. We stayed there maybe a total of 30 to 45 minutes.

15 Q Okay. And what were the types of conversations you  
16 had with the GRS personnel and the other Annex individuals?

17 A I can't remember specifics of the conversations.

18 Q Okay. So you don't remember whether you talked  
19 about security postures or things like that?

20 A We almost certainly would have talked about the  
21 security, where we were going, if there had been any issues,  
22 but nothing stands out in my mind.

23 Q I think you mentioned during your discussion with  
24 Heather that you talked with some of the Annex personnel  
25 about assisting in your movements during the Ambassador's

1 trip?

2 A So [REDACTED] had arranged with the Annex  
3 personnel, if they had free time and they were available,  
4 they weren't doing their own movements, that they would  
5 support us to augment the security that we had there.

6 Q Okay. And did that take place immediately  
7 afterwards when you went to the local council?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. And how many GRS personnel went with you to  
10 the local council?

11 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED]  
13 [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]

16 Q Okay. Let's go back to Exhibit 3. I don't know if  
17 you have it in front of you or if you have a copy of it.

18 Ms. Sawyer. Oh. Go off the record.

19 [Recess.]

20 BY MR. DAVIS:

21 Q All right. So you see down here next to 1600 hours  
22 a meeting, Benghazi local council, right?

23 A Yes.

24 Q So were you actually in that meeting or did you  
25 stand outside of the room? What can you tell us?

1 A I was outside of the room.

2 Q Okay. And approximately how long did that meeting  
3 take place?

4 A I can't remember how long the meeting took place.  
5 I knew we were at the venue until very late, about 10:30.

6 Q So it was a lengthy meeting?

7 A The meeting wasn't -- if I had to guess, I would  
8 say the meeting lasted over an hour, I can say. It was a  
9 long meeting. And then we stayed at that site for dinner up  
10 until 9:30, 10:00.

11 Q So there were press at that meeting?

12 A Press did show up at the meeting.

13 Q Were they there when you arrived?

14 A No.

15 Q Okay. When did they arrive?

16 A Sometime after we had.

17 Q And the meeting had already began?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Okay. And were the press allowed into the meeting  
20 or did they remain outside of the meeting?

21 A I can't remember. I do remember at one point we  
22 started turning press away. So, yeah, I don't think press  
23 were allowed.

24 Q How many press personnel are we talking about?

25 A I can't remember.

1 Q Three? Five? Ten? More?

2 A Less than 10, more than 3.

3 Q Okay. So what were your interactions like with the  
4 press when they arrived? Did you have any?

5 A No, I didn't. We talked to a couple of the  
6 organizers. We asked them to keep the press off into a  
7 separate area. They did. And after, I can't remember how  
8 long, we asked them if they could send the press away, and  
9 they left. There wasn't an issue. There wasn't -- there  
10 were no disturbances or anything.

11 Q What other U.S. Government personnel in addition to  
12 the Ambassador were at that meeting?

13 A So it was myself, it was [REDACTED] and it was some  
14 people from the Annex.

15 Q I'm sorry. Actually inside the meeting.

16 A Inside the meeting?

17 Q Yeah.

18 A I think there was one note taker who came in, who  
19 went in the meeting.

20 Q Okay. In addition to the Ambassador?

21 A Yes.

22 Q [REDACTED]

23 A Yes.

[REDACTED]

1           A     I don't remember.

2           Q     Okay. So you said after the meeting you remained  
3     at the hotel and had dinner?

4           A     Yes.

5           Q     And is that, "1800: Dinner: Hosted by Fadeel  
6     Hotel Owner"?

7           A     Yes.

8           Q     Is that the dinner you're talking about? Did you  
9     attend that dinner?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     Was there any discussion about the security posture  
12     in Benghazi at that dinner? Do you remember?

13          A     I don't -- like, I wasn't privy to the conversation  
14     that they were having at the dinner. We were -- it was in an  
15     open area, so we were close enough to observe the Ambassador,  
16     but not close enough to interfere with the conversations they  
17     were having.

18          Q     Okay. After the dinner broke up, did you travel  
19     back to the compound?

20          A     Yes.

21          Q     Did you travel in the same car with the Ambassador?

22          A     I can't remember the car that drove, but the  
23     Ambassador was with me.

24          Q     Okay. When you got back to the compound, did you  
25     go to bed? Did you stay up? What were your movements like?

1           A     Again, if I remember correctly, we walked around,  
2     we walked the Ambassador in, we talked about the movements  
3     for the next day, and then we all went to bed.

4           Q     What were his general -- what were your general  
5     observations about his demeanor regarding the movement to the  
6     next day?

7           A     There's nothing that stands out to me now or my  
8     recollection at the time of the Ambassador's demeanor being  
9     anything other than normal.

10          Q     Okay. Did you stay up and talk with fellow agents  
11     or other individuals?

12          A     No. After we got in, we briefly discussed the next  
13     day. Like, everybody was pretty tired, so we all turned in.

14          Q     Okay. And you turned in. Did you have a roommate?

15          A     No.

16          Q     Or were you on your own?

17          A     ██████████ was in the cantina with me, but we were in  
18     separate rooms.

19          Mr. Westmoreland. Can I interrupt? Because I just  
20     wanted to ask about, did anybody do any recon on the location  
21     where you went to the hotel?

22          Mr. ██████████ Yes, there was an advanced team that went  
23     out. It comprised the members from the Annex. They drove  
24     out in advance of us.

25          Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So the Annex guys advanced it?



1 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

2 Mr. Westmoreland. And then they stayed during the --

3 Mr. [REDACTED] Right.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. And you said you had to turn  
5 people away, or I guess you said a crowd or a lot of people  
6 started to come in.

7 Mr. [REDACTED] The press.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. The press.

9 Mr. [REDACTED] Yeah.

10 Mr. Westmoreland. And so would less than 10, more than  
11 3 be a crowd? I mean, was it a --

12 Mr. [REDACTED] So I wouldn't describe it as a crowd. I  
13 would describe it as press were -- press knew about the  
14 council meeting. Somehow they knew that the Ambassador was  
15 going to be there. I don't know how. And they started to  
16 show up. Maybe -- again, I don't know how many people. I  
17 don't remember having the impression that this is out of  
18 control or out of hand.

19 And then after a brief conversation with the Ambassador,  
20 we discussed what we agreed upon before we arrived, that he  
21 would do press the day that we left. And he agreed with  
22 that, and he also mentioned that he didn't have anything to  
23 say to the press right now. So at that point we asked them  
24 to go away, and they did.

25 Mr. Westmoreland. The other thing, and this is really

1 nitpicking, okay, but this was produced on September the 8th,  
2 which was 2 or 3 days before you actually got to Benghazi.  
3 And I'm assuming that everybody got one of these and that the  
4 control agent would have gotten one, I'm assuming, in  
5 Benghazi.

6 Ms. Safai. I'm sorry, Congressman, do you mean the  
7 agent in charge?

8 Mr. Westmoreland. It says, "U.S. Mission Benghazi  
9 Control Officer," is what it says here.

10 Ms. Safai. Oh, okay.

11 Mr. [REDACTED] The control officer would've been like  
12 the FSO who was organizing this. I don't know who that -- I  
13 can't remember who that was at the time.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. Would he have known that there  
15 wasn't a Villa A?

16 Mr. [REDACTED] I'm not sure that I understand. The  
17 numbering of the buildings were -- or, like, how they  
18 subsequently, like, became known was not what I called them  
19 when I was there. It was the cantina, the TOC, and the  
20 Ambassador's residence. That's how I would -- that's how I  
21 routinely referred to the buildings when I was there.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. The way it was explained to us,  
23 you've got an A, B, and a C, and that they let the A go back  
24 to whoever it was and they cut a hole in the wall between B  
25 and C. And so about -- and that was probably 8 or 10 weeks

1 maybe prior to the Ambassador going. And it does bring about  
2 some concern that whoever the control officer was or whatever  
3 or somebody in Tripoli or somebody in the States at the State  
4 Department or somebody didn't catch that there was not a  
5 Villa A. And I noticed in, I guess, your recap of -- you  
6 know, you never mentioned Villa A. It was always, you know,  
7 B and C.

8 Mr. [REDACTED] Sorry. So, again --

9 Ms. Safai. I'm sorry, was there a question that you  
10 had?

11 Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah. I mean, when you got there or  
12 when somebody that had been in Benghazi or some of these  
13 people were in Benghazi, would that have been something  
14 noticeable to differentiate between the villas or -- I mean,  
15 if you thought he was in Villa A and you thought he was in  
16 Villa A and everybody else knew he was in Villa C or B, I  
17 mean, did that cause any disturbance, I mean, or did they  
18 tell you -- I mean, it just seems confusing to me and it  
19 seems unreal that nobody would have known 8 weeks prior they  
20 had gotten rid of Villa A, and yet they had put it on this  
21 document.

22 Mr. [REDACTED] So, sir, I wasn't involved with the  
23 drafting of this document. I can say that the naming  
24 convention, while it was easily understood to me which  
25 buildings were which, like I said before, it was the cantina,

1 the TOC, and then the Ambassador's residence.

2 Mr. Westmoreland. Oh, I'm not saying about you. I  
3 mean, I know you knew where everything was at. I'm just  
4 saying whoever wrote this should've known that there was not  
5 a Villa A.

6 BY MR. DAVIS:

7 Q Were you provided with a document, either this one  
8 or something similar, before you left Tripoli?

9 A I remember we talked over the schedule and we  
10 looked at a schedule at the -- after the modified Country  
11 Team meeting, but I would not have traveled with this  
12 document with me.

13 Q Do you know who was in charge of creating the  
14 schedule?

15 A I do not.

16 Q Do you know who would've been in charge of creating  
17 a document such as this one that laid out the Ambassador's  
18 schedule?

19 A I do not.

20 Q Jumping ahead to the morning of September 11, let's  
21 turn the page on Exhibit 3, go to page 2. "0900: Breakfast  
22 with --" redacted, for the Ambassador's schedule. Do you  
23 know who redacted is?

24 A I do not remember.

25 Q Okay. Do you recall the Ambassador having

1 breakfast with anybody on the morning of September 11?

2 A Not specifically, no.

3 Q Okay. When did you wake up the morning of  
4 September 11, and what were your first actions that day, if  
5 you can remember?

6 A I can't remember specifically when I woke up. But  
7 I do know that shortly after I woke up I went to the TOC to  
8 verify the status of Mr. [REDACTED] and see if we had, like,  
9 any events or anything that we needed to be -- or that I  
10 needed to know about.

11 Q At what point in the morning did you learn about  
12 the surveillance?

13 A After [REDACTED] returned from his movement taking  
14 Mr. [REDACTED] down to the airport.

15 Q Do you have any idea approximately what time that  
16 was?

17 A I don't.

18 Q Okay. So Mr. [REDACTED] was the one that told you about  
19 it?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And what did you do when you found out?

22 A He told me that he was already taking care of it.  
23 He was going -- he was drafting a letter to the MFA. He had  
24 requested the police support come back and not leave. So it  
25 seemed as if they had a handle on the situation.

1 Q So the letter to the MFA that Mr. [REDACTED] was  
2 drafting came as a result of surveillance that morning?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Okay. Do you remember having any further  
5 discussions with him about the surveillance?

6 A No.

7 Q Okay. What about Mr. [REDACTED] do you remember  
8 mentioning it to him at all?

9 A Not specifically. I mean, we all were -- like, we  
10 all were made aware of the events. I can't remember if I  
11 specifically briefed [REDACTED] or if he was with me when they  
12 briefed me.

13 Q Okay. Looking ahead on the schedule here, "TBD  
14 11:00: Meeting" -- redacted -- "February 17 Brigade." Do  
15 you know if the Ambassador had a meeting with anybody from  
16 the February 17 Brigade on September 11?

17 A I do not.

18 Q Okay. Can you explain, to the best of your  
19 recollection, who came in and out of the compound that  
20 morning or afternoon?

21 A I can't remember who came in and out. It was all  
22 based off of the Ambassador's schedule and the list provided  
23 to the guards with the times that they would show up.

24 Q Okay. Do you know if anybody from the Annex came  
25 over on September 11?

1           A     Yes. At least in the early afternoon, maybe late  
2     afternoon, members of the Annex -- and I can't remember their  
3     names -- came by and informed us that there was a nonspecific  
4     threat that was not targeted against Americans.

5           Q     Okay. Do you remember the nature of that  
6     nonspecific threat at all?

7           A     That's it. It's a nonspecific threat.

8           Q     Okay. Do you remember taking any action after  
9     hearing about this nonspecific threat?

10          A     No.

11          Mr. Westmoreland. Can I?

12          Why would the CIA have gotten that information and the  
13     TOC wouldn't have gotten it or the Ambassador wouldn't have  
14     gotten it?

15          Mr. [REDACTED] I don't know, sir. I mean, I don't know  
16     what the Ambassador knew. I know that when they came over  
17     and they briefed us, it would have included the TOC officer,  
18     which was [REDACTED], so he would have gotten the information. And  
19     the conversation, when they gave us the information, was more  
20     to the gist of, hey, guys, I hate doing this, it's the same  
21     thing as always, nonspecific threat against -- or not  
22     targeted against Americans.

23          Mr. Westmoreland. Was it, you know, hush? Can you tell  
24     us who it was, I mean, even by their code name? I mean --

25          Mr. [REDACTED] No, I can't. It was not -- I can't

1 remember specifically who it was, sir.

2 Mr. Davis. Do you know if the chief of base who came  
3 over?

4 Mr. [REDACTED] I don't know. It might have been. But,  
5 again, I can't remember.

6 Mr. Westmoreland. So he didn't directly tell you?

7 Mr. [REDACTED] No, we were all in the room. They took  
8 all the agents in and, you know, closed door, this is what we  
9 know. That was it.

10 BY MR. DAVIS:

11 Q How many people from the Annex came over to deliver  
12 the message?

13 A I can't remember.

14 Q Okay. Was it more than just the individual who  
15 came?

16 A Yes. Maybe two people.

17 Q Okay. Do you know if the Annex personnel were  
18 conducting any other activities on the compound in addition  
19 to telling you about this nonspecific threat?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. So they never told you about any type of  
22 collection that they might have been doing at that time?

23 A No.

24 Q Okay. Do you remember having any side  
25 conversations with anybody from the Annex when they came



1 over?

2 A No.

3 Q Okay. Do you remember sometime during the day on  
4 September 11 grabbing your M4 rifle at any point?

5 Ms. Safai. Before the attack or including the attack?

6 BY MR. DAVIS:

7 Q Before the attack.

8 A Not to my recollection, no.

9 Q Okay. Is it possible you could have taken your  
10 M4 -- where is the M4 normally located?

11 A It would've been locked in my room while I was on  
12 the compound.

13 Q It would've been locked in your room?

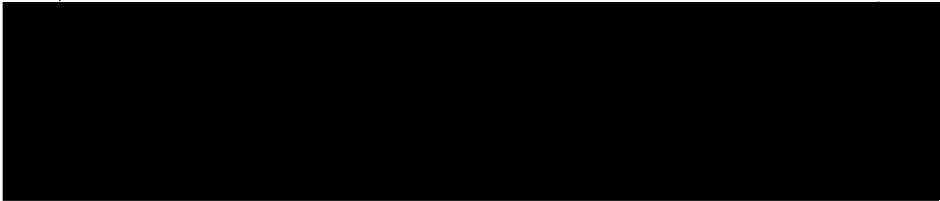
14 A Yes.

15 Q So you don't remember taking --

16 A No, I'm sorry. I can't remember. It would have  
17 either been locked in my room or in the TOC. I can't  
18 remember specifically.

19 Q Do you remember at all if you went to the TOC and  
20 took it from the TOC and put it in your room?

21 A I can't remember.



1 concerns at all?

2 A Not to my recollection.

3 Q Okay. Was he able to roam freely on the compound,  
4 or what was his status, if you can remember?

5 A My interactions with him were very limited. I  
6 don't remember there being any impediment to his movement  
7 while I was there.

8 Q Okay. Do you remember hearing any concerns in your  
9 discussions with the other DS personnel about the quality or  
10 the trustworthiness of the Quick Reaction Force or the local  
11 Guard Force?

12 A I can't remember specific conversations. I --  
13 yeah, I can't remember specific conversations about the guard  
14 force, and I don't know what anybody else's opinions or  
15 impressions of the guard force other than mine would've been.

18 A No.

19 Q No, okay.

20 BY MR. BARRINEAU:

21 Q So I know you weren't there for very long, but did  
22 you have any opinions of the 17th February Brigade or the  
23 local Guard Force just in the limited interaction?

24 A So the only time that I interacted with the 17th  
25 Brigade was, A, when they came to support us, and then, B,

1       when they provided cover when we were egressing Benghazi.  
2       With the local guards, I remember thinking that they just  
3       looked kind of sloppy. It didn't look like a -- they just  
4       didn't look good to me.

5           Q     You discussed during the previous hour with Heather  
6       that you learned at some point during the day of a protest in  
7       Cairo?

8           A     Yes.

9           Q     And do you recall, again, how you learned of that?

10          A     I can't remember specifically how I learned about  
11       it. It might have been through watching the news, but I  
12       can't -- I can't remember.

13          Q     And then jumping ahead in time a little bit, you  
14       said you first learned that something was occurring at the  
15       compound is when you heard voices outside that were getting  
16       progressively closer?

17          A     I heard noises, yeah, and it sounded as if these  
18       noises, possibly voices, were getting closer, and then there  
19       was an explosion.

20          Q     Okay. Do you recall at any time during the day  
21       seeing any type of a crowd form outside of the mission  
22       compound?

23          A     Other than?

24          Q     Other than normal activity that would have occurred  
25       in Benghazi, just people coming and going.

1           A     So other than the attack and the attackers, no.

2           Q     Okay. So there was no protest, to the best of your  
3 knowledge, the day of the attack?

4           A     Not to my knowledge.

5           Q     If there had been a protest, and you had seen  
6 either through surveillance or with your own eyes, what steps  
7 would you have taken if there was a protest or demonstration  
8 outside the compound?

9           A     I kind of want to stay away from hypothetical  
10 questions. I don't know. There are too many variables when  
11 you are talking about protests and things.

12          Q     So it's possible you could have notified the RSO in  
13 Tripoli?

14          A     That would've been standard.

15          Q     Okay. Would it have been standard to have called  
16 into the DS Command Center if there was a large gathering  
17 outside of the compound?

18          A     Depending on the nature of the gathering, you would  
19 contact the RSO and then you would let them pass that up the  
20 chain.

21          Q     Okay. Going back to Exhibit 3. There is a meeting  
22 on here at 1400 hours, and the meeting is with "redacted."  
23 But underneath it says, "Almarfa Shipping and Maritime  
24 Services Company." Can you tell us anything about that  
25 meeting?

1           A     No, I cannot.

2           Q     Do you know how many people arrived for that  
3     meeting?

4           A     I do not.

5           Q     Okay. Later on in the evening, the Ambassador met  
6     with the Turkish diplomat. Are you familiar with that?

7           A     Yes.

8           Q     Okay. And is that a meeting that you attended?

9           A     No.

10          Q     Okay. When the Turkish diplomat arrived, did he  
11     have any sort of a protective detail with him?

12          A     I don't know.

13          Q     Okay. Do you recall having any discussions with  
14     any members of his protective detail?

15          A     No.

16          Q     Okay. So what were you doing in the evening of  
17     September 11 in the hour or 2 prior to the attack?

18          A     We were confirming the Ambassador's moves for the  
19     next day. We were assigning personnel to go and be advance.  
20     We were confirming details with whether or not the types of  
21     weapons we were allowed to take into these locations with us.  
22     And once everything was confirmed, I talked to the Ambassador  
23     briefly, and then I went down to Villa C and was just talking  
24     with the rest of the agents.

25          Q     Do you remember what that brief conversation with

1 the Ambassador entailed?

2 A I asked him if he had anything else that he needed  
3 to tell me. They wanted to share that we were -- we had  
4 everything laid on for tomorrow, and I asked him if he had  
5 any concerns or anything, and he was fine.

6 Q At some point in the evening did any British  
7 individuals come over and drop off vehicles?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. And do you remember approximately what time  
10 that could've been?

11 A I can't remember the time.

12 Q Did you have any interaction with any of the people  
13 who came over?

14 A Other than just saying hi as they came by, no. I  
15 think I talked to [REDACTED] and asked him what was going on, and  
16 he was like -- he explained to me that they would come and  
17 store weapons and vehicles there because they no longer had a  
18 presence in Benghazi.

19 Mr. Westmoreland. You were the Ambassador's head of his  
20 detail, correct?

21 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. Were you supposed to stay within  
23 10 feet of him or behind a door, I mean, at these meetings?

24 Mr. [REDACTED] So these are situation dependent, but on  
25 the compound the Ambassador has free rein.

1 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

2 Mr. [REDACTED] So everybody is checked when they come  
3 into the compound, and once they're in the compound we give  
4 the Ambassador space so he can conduct his meeting.

5 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So once they're in the  
6 compound --

7 Mr. [REDACTED] Right.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. -- that's just it. Okay.

9 BY MR. DAVIS:

10 Q When the British individuals came over, do you  
11 recall if they mentioned anything about a large crowd outside  
12 or any type of protest?

13 A Not to my recollection.

14 Q And you didn't observe anything like that --

15 A Not to my recollection.

16 Q -- at that time? Okay.

17 Are you familiar with the fact that right before the  
18 attack occurred there was a car outside the compound that  
19 drove off?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. What was the car that was normally stationed  
22 outside of the compound?

23 A I don't know. I had only been in Benghazi for  
24 about a day at that time. So --

25 Q Okay. So once the attack began, I think you told

1 Heather that you ran to the TOC --

2 A Yeah.

3 Q -- because that's where you thought the Ambassador  
4 was located, right?

5 A Yes.

6 Q He was not there?

7 A Right.

8 Q And so then you went back to the cantina and you  
9 rendezvoused with Mr. [REDACTED]?

10 A Yes.

11 Q At any time during the attack -- well, I'm sorry.  
12 Let me back up. Did you have a radio with you at all?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Okay. And that radio was a -- who was that  
15 radio -- who were you able to communicate with?

16 A To the TOC.

17 Q To the TOC, okay.

18 Do you know if Mr. [REDACTED] had a radio with him as well?

19 A I can't remember.

20 Q Okay. So you described how you and Mr. [REDACTED]  
21 were -- was it in your room? Is that where you were?

22 A So we linked up -- at what point?

23 Q At the point where you had the other fellow, the  
24 Libyan fellow in the room with you. Was that in your room or  
25 what location was that?



1           A     That was in the room in the furthest back corner,  
2     which would've been [REDACTED] room.

3           Q     So [REDACTED] room. So you had the radio when you were  
4     in the room with Mr. [REDACTED]?

5           A     Yes.

6           Q     And who were you talking with over the radio?

7           A     [REDACTED] in the TOC.

8           Q     Okay. Were you able to talk with any other agents?  
9     Did you talk with Mr. [REDACTED]?

10          A     There were moments in the night when [REDACTED] was on  
11     the radio, and we were able to hear at a couple of different  
12     points [REDACTED] on the roof.

13          Q     Okay. Were you able to communicate directly with  
14     [REDACTED]?

15          A     At certain points during the night I communicated  
16     directly with [REDACTED] and with [REDACTED] in the TOC. And I  
17     can't remember having direct communication with [REDACTED].

18          Q     Was your radio able to communicate with their  
19     radios or were there multiple --

20          A     There were multiple radios. But, generally, if I  
21     can hear on the radio, the capacity is there to receive, but  
22     there are many things that interfere with the reception of a  
23     radio.

24          Q     Okay. And this particular occasion, how clear  
25     was -- of this reception coming over the radio?

1           A    When we had communication, from what I remember, it  
2   was fairly clear.

3           Q    Did you ever attempt to communicate with Mr. [REDACTED]  
4   over the radio?

5           A    Yes.

6           Q    Okay. And was that successful?

7           A    There were a couple of radio calls that were not --  
8   like with no response back.

9           Q    Did you have a cell phone on you at this time?

10          A    Yes.

11          Q    And did you make any calls on your cell phone?

12          A    Yes.

13          Q    Who did you call?

14          A    I called the TOC in Tripoli.

15          Q    The TOC in Tripoli?

16          A    Yes.

17          Q    And that's when you talked with [REDACTED]?

18          A    Yes.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

1

2

BY MR. DAVIS:

3

Q And was he the only person you called on your cell

4

phone during the attack on the Special Mission Compound?

5

A No.

6

Q Who else did you call?

7

A I called my [REDACTED].

8

Q Okay. Back in the States?

9

A [REDACTED]. The situation was dissolving

10

relatively quickly, so I called to say goodbye [REDACTED].

11

Q Was there anybody else you called in addition to

12

the TOC and your family?

13

A No.

14

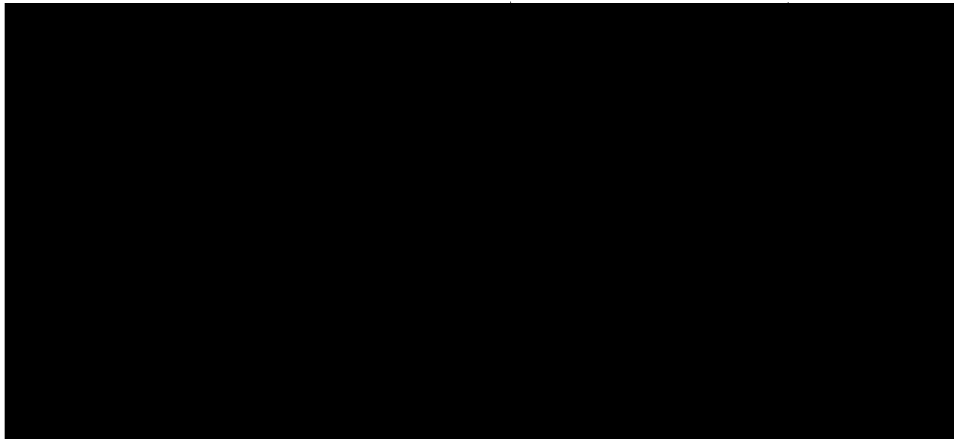
Q Outside of the radio and outside of the telephone,

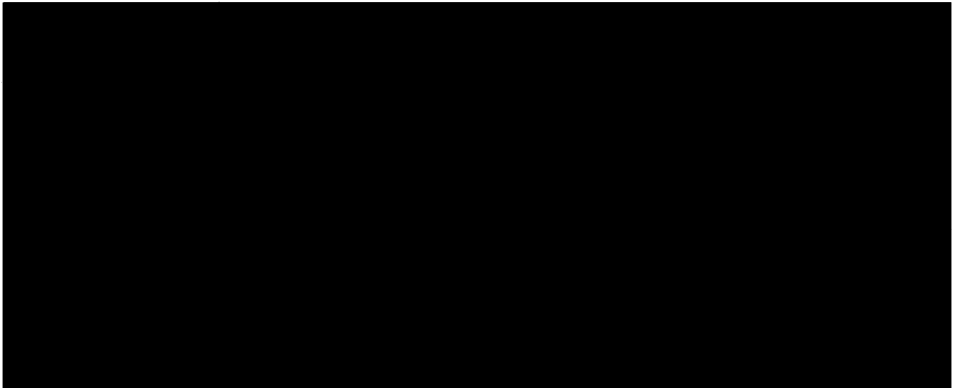
15

were you able to communicate with anybody else outside of the

16

room via text message or pin to pin?





9           Mr. Westmoreland. Did you ever have any contact with  
10       the Annex?

11           Mr. [REDACTED] That night?

12           Mr. Westmoreland. Uh-huh.

13           Mr. [REDACTED] No, not specifically, and not before they  
14       arrived at the special mission.

15           Mr. Westmoreland. But do you know who was communicating  
16       with them?

17           Mr. [REDACTED] To my knowledge, it was [REDACTED].

18           Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. Did they have the same  
19       frequency? Or in other words, could they talk by radio or  
20       would it have been cell phone or --


21           Mr. [REDACTED] So there was a radio in the TOC that  
22       communicated directly with the team in the Annex, and they  
23       had exchanged cell phone information before.

24           Mr. Westmoreland. All right. But your radio wouldn't  
25       talk to --

1           Mr. [REDACTED] No, it was a different radio, different  
2 frequencies, different fills.

3           BY MR. DAVIS:





4 Q Let me ask this question. Jumping ahead to the  
5 mortar attacks.

6 A Yes.

7 Q Where were you physically located when that  
8 occurred?

9 A Before the mortar attacks happened, it was just  
10 before they happened, we, the team from Tripoli had arrived  
11 at the Annex. They were replacing us on our overwatch  
12 positions, and I was coming down the ladder off of the roof  
13 when the first mortar round landed.

14 Q So you had spent most of the evening on the roof?

15 A Yes.

16 Q And when the team from Tripoli came, you were  
17 leaving to go down off the roof?

18 A Yes.

19 Q So when the first attack came, were you still  
20 outside?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Were you on ladder or were you on firm ground?

23 A Yes, I was on a ladder about halfway up when the  
24 first mortar round came, like I fell from about halfway up  
25 the ladder to the ground.

1 Q And were you able to get back up after you fell?

2 A Yes.

3 Q And what did you do when you got back up?

4 A I went into the building.

5 Q And how many people were in the building that you  
6 could see when you walked in?

7 A Everybody else was at the Annex. I don't remember  
8 an exact number of people who were there.

9 Q Were you in the building where the majority of the  
10 individuals were or were you in a separate building?

11 A No, I was in a building with the majority of the  
12 individuals.

13 Q At what point did you learn that you were going to  
14 evac?

15 A The evacuation came after the last mortar round,  
16 after the last mortar round hit, and the casualties had  
17 already been brought into the building.

18 Q So, briefly, can you describe the time from when  
19 you learned you were evacuating to the time when you arrived  
20 at the airport?

21 A Yeah. I mean, a number of things happened. We got  
22 information that 17th Brigade was going to be able to come --  
23 I'm sorry. Either 17th Brigade or the Army was going to be  
24 able to come to provide cover for us as we moved to the  
25 airport. There was a plane standing by, two planes standing

1 by at the airport to transport us out. Once we made the  
2 decision that that was going to happen, we tried our best to  
3 stabilize the injured. We loaded all of the, you know, all  
4 of the able-bodied people out. We moved the casualties out.  
5 And then we went around the back to recover the bodies.

6 Q When you arrived at the airport were there any  
7 other Americans already at the airport?

8 A There were people who came down from the Annex in  
9 Tripoli who stayed at the airport to secure air travel out  
10 and ensure the air field was still secure when we got there.

11 Q How do you know that those individuals had come  
12 down from Tripoli and remained at the air field?

13 A It was briefed to me that the team from Tripoli was  
14 down and they were securing travel.

15 Q Okay. So in addition to those individuals, do you  
16 recall seeing any other individuals, Americans, at the  
17 airport when you arrived?

18 A No.

19 Q Between the time you --

20 Mr. Westmoreland. Can I ask one?

21 Mr. Davis. Yes.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. Did you say go and recover the body?  
23 Are you talking about the Ambassador's body?

24 Mr. [REDACTED] No, no, I mean [REDACTED] And  
25 those two --



1           Mr. Westmoreland. Were they still on the roof?

2           Mr. [REDACTED] No. The mortar blasts had blown them off  
3 of the roof, so they were on the ground behind the building.

4           Mr. Westmoreland. So the mortar actually --

5           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

6           Mr. Westmoreland. -- blew them off the roof?

7           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

8           BY MR. DAVIS:

9           Q     Approximately how long would you say it was from  
10 when you arrived at the airport to when you boarded the  
11 plane?

12          A     I can't remember. I mean, I would say 7 days, but  
13 it probably was not that long.

14          Q     Do you recall seeing any other American personnel  
15 arriving at the airport after you got there that were not  
16 coming from the Annex?

17          A     Not to my recollection.

18          Q     On the plane ride from Benghazi to Tripoli, what  
19 was your role on the plane? Were you a passenger? Were you  
20 tending aid? What were you doing?

21          A     So I was a passenger. Everybody was pretty shaken  
22 up, so, you know, I did my best to try to help people, and we  
23 talked things out. I called back to Tripoli to let the nurse  
24 know that we were bringing casualties. Once we got close  
25 enough that cell phone reception was established, I had

1       called and gave her medevac information, and just generally  
2       offer support to people.

3           Q     Do you remember if you were sitting at the front of  
4       the plane or at the back of the plane?

5           A     I was in the front of the plane.

6           Q     Do you remember seeing anybody on that flight that  
7       you hadn't seen before?


8           A     Since I had only been there for a day, like, most  
9       of the faces were new to me.

10          Q     Do you remember having any discussions with anybody  
11       on the plane about any type of protest or demonstration?

12          A     No.

13          Q     So when you arrived at Tripoli, what steps did you  
14       take at that point?

15          A     So when we arrived in Tripoli we obviously got the  
16       injured off the plane as soon as possible. We were briefed  
17       that everything in Tripoli was still fine, that where the  
18       Americans had consolidated. And then they took us directly  
19       from the airport to where the Americans had been  
20       consolidated.



1 Q So do you recall who else was in your vehicle

2 [REDACTED]  
3 A If I remember correctly, [REDACTED] was in the  
4 vehicle with me. [REDACTED] was in the vehicle with me.

5 Q And do you remember what, if any, conversations you  
6 had in that vehicle?

7 A I asked if we could get a change of clothes because  
8 we were pretty covered in blood.

9 Q Were you able to eventually get that change of  
10 clothes?

11 A Yes, as quickly as possible, because it wouldn't  
12 have been good for the rest of the Embassy to see that.

13 Q How were you able to get that change of clothes.

14 A We had to leave and go back to the villas.

15 Q And who is we?

16 A Myself, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED].  
[REDACTED]

18 the villas?

19 A I can't remember exactly.

20 Q Or did you go straight from the airport to the  
21 villas?

22 A I can't remember.

23 Q I know it's probably all a blur, but how long  
24 approximately were you back at the villas getting your change  
25 of clothes?

1 A Very quickly, maybe 5 minutes.

2 Q Okay. And then at that point you went back to the  
[REDACTED]

4 A Yes.

5 Q Did you shower at any point?

6 A I just changed clothes.  
[REDACTED]

8 speaking with any CIA personnel?

9 A I remember talking to the GRS team members who were  
10 in Tripoli who didn't leave to support.

11 Q I'm sorry, who did or did not leave?

12 A Who did not leave to support.

13 Q And you had known them previously from your time in  
14 Tripoli?

15 A I mean, I had met them before.

16 Q Okay.

17 A And other than that, nothing stands out.

18 Q Do you recall ever meeting the chief of station  
19 during your time there, during your time on September 12?

20 A The chief of station in?

21 Q In Tripoli.

22 A Tripoli. I can't remember.

23 Q What about the deputy chief of station there?

24 A That whole day is pretty much a blur. I can't.  
25 There were a lot of people.

1 Q Did you know who the chief of station chief and the  
2 deputy chief of station were from your time in Tripoli?

3 A Again, I had seen people from the Annex at country  
4 team and in and out of the Embassy, and I knew that they were  
5 from the Annex, but at this time I don't remember  
6 specifically who they were.

7 Q So in addition to your conversations with the  
8 Tripoli GRS individuals, do you recall having any other

10 departed to go back to the airport?

11 A I mean, there were lots of conversations. The  
12 entire Embassy had been moved to that location. So, you  
13 know, there was lots of conversations, generally about what  
14 happened. Is everybody okay? What's going to happen next?

15 Q Were any conversations more formal than other  
16 conversations, or was it all just small talk and mingling?

17 A I mean, I think small talk is kind of  
18 misrepresentation, but it was either very quick relaying  
19 information or inquiries about how people were doing.

20 Q So nobody ever came over to you and said, hey,  
21 [REDACTED] we need to talk to you, you were there.

22 A No. Most of that reporting was sent out while we  
23 were at the Annex in Benghazi.

24 Q What do you mean by most of that reporting?

25 A Most of the, like, reporting back of what was going

1 on, how many people, was happening simultaneously while we  
2 were mounting a defense, while the people inside were  
3 relaying information to the TOC in Tripoli, to the Command  
4 Center, to all the relevant people who needed to be informed.

5 Ms. Safai. While you were still in Benghazi?

6 Mr. [REDACTED] While we were still in Benghazi.

7 BY MR. DAVIS:

8 Q Okay. So you don't recall having any type of  
9 formal or very informal debrief, to use a term, with anybody  
10 at the facility?

11 A Not to my recollection.

12 Q Just shorter conversations with --

13 A Right.

14 Q Do you remember in any of these conversations with  
15 anybody, do you remember a protest or demonstration being  
16 mentioned at all?

17 A Not to my recollection.

18 Q So at some point you went back to the airport. Is  
19 that right?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Did you go back to the airport for evacuation or  
22 did you go back to the airport to greet the other plane  
23 coming in from Benghazi?

24 A I went back to the airport -- so both happened. I  
25 went back to the airport the first time to greet the plane.

1 that was coming in and to escort the Ambassador's body to  
2 where it was being held.

3 Q Do you remember, this time back to the airport, do  
4 you remember who you rode back with to the airport and from  
5 the airport?

6 A I don't remember. I think [REDACTED] drove, but  
7 I don't remember who else was there.

8 Q At what point did you learn you were getting  
9 evacuated to Germany?

10 A Later that day. Originally we had requested to  
11 stay, but I think ultimately the DCM made the decision that  
12 we would all go back.

13 Q Did you have lunch in Tripoli?

14 A I don't remember eating until we got back to  
15 Germany.

16 Q So the plane ride back to Germany, do you remember  
17 who you sat next to or sat near on the plane?

18 A No, I don't.

19 Q Okay. Do you remember seeing anybody on the plane  
20 that you hadn't seen before or you didn't recognize?

21 A Not to my recollection.

22 Q Okay. There were Annex people there from Benghazi  
23 who you had just met --

24 A Right.

25 Q -- and you might not have remembered their faces?

1           A     Right. I mean, there was no face that stood out to  
2     me as, like, hey, I've never seen you before.

3           Q     Do you recall having any conversation with any GRS  
4     personnel on the plane?

5           A     Not specifically.

6           Q     And do you remember seeing or having any  
7     conversations with the deputy chief of the base in Benghazi  
8     on the plane?

9           A     No, not specifically.

10          Q     Do you remember having any conversations at all on  
11     the plane to Germany?

12          A     Yeah. I mean, I know that I talked to people in  
13     the plane. I know that I talked to people when we were  
14     waiting to get evaced. It was a very tense time, and as such  
15     you have to kind of try to keep calm and keep people's  
16     spirits up. So there were lots of conversations trying to  
17     lighten the mood.

18          Q     So what can you tell us about what happened when  
19     you arrived in Germany?

20          A     When we arrived in Germany we were met by the RSO  
21     in Germany who took us all in. It was a military base, so  
22     they had some food. They had a couple of coats. They had  
23     stuff set up for us. They had arranged lodging in the hotel.  
24     And at that time the RSO took the agents upstairs, yeah, took  
25     the agents upstairs where he afforded us the opportunities to



1 call our families.

2 Q Do you know if any personnel from the Annex went  
3 upstairs with you or was this strictly DS personnel?

4 A Everybody would have gone to the control room,  
5 which would have been open to everybody, but specifically the  
6 RSO in Frankfurt got the agents.

7 Q Did you at that point have any idea how long you  
8 would be in Germany?

9 A No.

10 Q At any time during your stay -- well, how long were  
11 you in Germany for?

12 A I can't remember exactly. I know it was about a  
13 week. I can't say if it was more than a week.

14 Q Is that similar to Mr. [REDACTED] and --

15 A We all left at the same time.

16 Q All at the same time. Okay. Did you all go back  
17 in the same plane?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Do you recall how long you had been in Germany  
20 before you were interviewed by an FBI agent?

21 A Not specifically. I can't remember.

22 Q How many people were present for your interview  
23 with the FBI?

24 A If I remember correctly, it was myself, one FBI  
25 agent, one U.S. attorney, and one member from Diplomatic

1 Security.

2 Q Do you know if this conversation was recorded like  
3 we're doing today or if it was videotaped at all?

4 A It wasn't videotaped, and to my knowledge it wasn't  
5 recorded.

6 Q But there were individuals there presumably taking  
7 notes?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Do you remember in that conversation mentioning  
10 anything about a protest or a demonstration?

11 A I remember telling them that, again, I don't speak  
12 or read Arabic, but when we came out of the building there  
13 was a white sign with Arabic lettering on it. I don't know  
14 what that says. I don't know what that means. And I  
15 remember relaying that information.

16 Q And that was inside the compound walls?

17 A Yes.

18 Q Do you remember the FBI agent or the attorney  
19 mentioning anything or asking you anything about a protest or  
20 a demonstration?

21 A I can't remember.

22 Q Do you remember during your time in Germany if you  
23 ever saw or had any interactions with General Carter Ham?

24 A I think -- I can't remember specifically, but his  
25 name sounds familiar. I don't know if that's from when I was

1 in the Army and stationed in Germany or --

2 Q So at that time he was the head of AFRICOM.

3 A Yes, he was the AFRICOM Commander.

4 Q But you don't recall ever seeing him or having  
5 interaction with him while you were there?

6 A I can't remember specifically, but it sounds -- it  
7 makes sense that we would, because we were there when they  
8 took the bodies back to the U.S.

9 Q For your interview before the ARB what can you tell  
10 us about that in terms of who from the ARB -- how many ARB  
11 members were there?

12 A I can't remember specifically who was in the ARB.  
13 It was a long time ago. I know there was a lot of people.

14 Q A lot of people. Okay. Did you ever sit down with  
15 anybody, outside of your time in Germany where the FBI  
16 interviewed you, did you ever sit down with anybody at DS and  
17 talk about what happened?

18 Ms. Safai. While in Germany? Can you say that again?

19 BY MR. DAVIS:

20 Q Did you at any time sit down with anybody at DS,  
21 outside of your interview with the FBI in Germany, to talk  
22 about what happened?

23 A In a formal process?

24 Q In a formal process.

25 A No.

1 Q Do you know who [REDACTED] is?

2 A Yes.

3 Q When was the first time you met or talked with Mr.

4 [REDACTED]?

5 A Some time later, several months later, where the DS

6 asked us to sit down with [REDACTED] and go over the video with him

7 and talk --

8 Q Did you do that by yourself or did you do that with

9 any of the other agents who were there?

10 A We did it individually.

11 Q And did you meet with him once or did you meet with

12 him on multiple occasions?

13 A I only met with [REDACTED] once.

14 Q Did you have any follow-up emails or phone

15 conversations with him?

16 A Once several months, maybe a year or so later, [REDACTED]

17 reached out about a question that he had had, like how many

18 rounds we had with us that night, and I don't remember.

19 Q Are you familiar the Independent Panel on Best

20 Practices? Do you know what that is?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Did you meet with anybody from that panel?

23 A Yes.

24 Q Who did you meet with from that panel?

25 A The panel members.

1           Q     Okay. And how long approximately did that  
2 interview take place for?

3           A     Maybe 2 hours.

4           Q     And were you the only person being interviewed  
5 during that time with the independent panel?

6           A     Yes.

7           Q     And what about your interview with the ARB, were  
8 you the only person being interviewed on that day? Were you  
9 the only person being interviewed during your interview?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     Were you ever asked at any time to provide or  
12 search for any documents relevant to either our inquiry or  
13 the ARB's inquiry?

14          A     Yes. There was a general email that went out that  
15 asked us to turn over any emails that we still had in our  
16 presence, like in our possession, related to Libya or  
17 Benghazi during that timeframe -- or during a set timeframe.

18          Q     And this occurred roughly approximately how long  
19 after the attack?

20          A     I can't remember, but it was -- I think it was in  
21 preparation for the ARB, so around that timeframe.

22          Q     And did you, in fact, search for documents?

23          A     I looked to see any emails that I had, and I didn't  
24 have any in my possession. However, when I was in Tripoli  
25 they created a separate State account with a separate email

1 address, and I informed them of that, but there wouldn't have  
2 been very many emails in that.

3 Q Was the separate State account created for you or  
4 was it created for DS generally?

5 A It's for logistical purposes because my domain was  
6 DS. Africa or NEA has different servers, so it would have  
7 taken forever for my profile to load up, so when I arrived at  
8 post they created a different email account for me.

9 Q Did you ever sign any type of nondisclosure  
10 agreement not to talk about what happened the night of the  
11 attack?

12 A Not to my recollection, no.

13 Q When did you first learn that this committee wanted  
14 to speak with you?

15 A Around the end of December. I had just received  
16 information that there was going to be a new committee  
17 convening and that they may ask that we participate in that.

18 Q When did you fly into town for this interview?

19 A I flew in Sunday night.

20 Q And when are you departing?

21 A Tomorrow.

22 Ms. Barrineau. One really random, back like 45 minutes  
23 ago. You said on the day of September 11 that a couple of  
24 guys from the Annex came over and gave you a nonspecific  
25 threat?

1 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

2 Ms. Barrineau. Do you have any idea what, since the  
3 information wasn't specific, what prompted them to come over  
4 as opposed --

5 Mr. [REDACTED] No.

6 Mr. Barrineau. Okay.

7 Mr. Westmoreland. Agent [REDACTED] --

8 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

9 Mr. Westmoreland. -- I know that that night had to be  
10 pretty traumatic, and I can't imagine what you all were going  
11 through when you realized what was happening. But when you  
12 talk to people, especially the military folks, you explain to  
13 them how they got out of that or what they did, and they say,  
14 I went back to my training. I relied on my training. Forget  
15 the circumstances, I went back to my training.

16 It seems that at the Annex that there were some  
17 predetermined defensive positions that people were assigned  
18 to in case something did happen.

19 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

20 Mr. Westmoreland. And was that your -- I mean, when you  
21 got there, was that the way it seemed to you, that there was  
22 some type of defensive plan in place?

23 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir. Just based on my training and  
24 experience going to the rooftops made sense. There was a  
25 significant amount of cover. The walls were thick. They

1        were concrete. And it also gave us a position with which we  
2        could overwatch the entire facility and see multiple avenues  
3        of approach.

4        Mr. Westmoreland. Good. But they didn't all, you know,  
5        everybody didn't just get together and go, oh, okay, I'm  
6        going to go over here, and I don't know where you're going or  
7        whatever. I mean, I'm assuming when this attack happened,  
8        they basically knew where they were going.

9        Mr. [REDACTED] As far as what happened on the Annex?

10       Mr. Westmoreland. Yes.

11       Mr. [REDACTED] I'm not privy to their security plan, but  
12       when we arrived people were going to the roof to pull  
13       security, and it made sense that we would go to augment them  
14       up there.

15       Mr. Westmoreland. When the attack started at the  
16       facility, and I think most of us have seen the video of what  
17       happened, there doesn't appear to be any plan that was  
18       executed as far as going to any type of defensive positions  
19       or a defensive status. How would you categorize what  
20       happened?

21       Ms. Safai. I'm sorry, Congressman. Before we address  
22       the question, can we take a 1-minute break?

23       Mr. Davis. Yes, we can.

24       [Discussion off the record.]

25       Mr. Westmoreland. I was just asking about what you



1 observed when the facility came under attack. Because, you  
2 know, I guess I've watched too many war movies or you hear  
3 these things, battle stations or the different alarms that go  
4 off, and I was under the impression that there was a signal  
5 that if something did happen was kind of sent out over the  
6 loud speakers, and I'm assuming lights would have come on and  
7 different things. And if that signal went off, did that mean  
8 meet us in the cantina or meet us in the TOC or go to your  
9 battle stations?

10 Mr. [REDACTED] Right. Well, sir, so just from my  
11 experience and my training -- and, again, I was in the Army,  
12 I have had two combat deployments to Iraq -- and the time  
13 where you mount your defense is before everything happened.  
14 And there was a very, very short amount of time from the time  
15 that we heard something before we were overwhelmed.

16 Now, that being said, once you are outnumbered, you  
17 can't go to the roof, you can't pull the security, you can't  
18 lock the gates. Once all the successive tripwires have been  
19 crossed and everybody is now pouring onto the compound, you  
20 have to react. And it's at that point that your training  
21 needs to kick in, as you said before.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. So what did your training tell you to  
23 do at that point?

24 Mr. [REDACTED] My training from both DS and in the Army  
25 and all the survival things is you need to create space and

1 time, space and time. And that space and time is not to  
2 guarantee that you will successfully overcome the odds. That  
3 is just to give you more time to find a window and then take  
4 advantage of that window. And that is a -- I mean, I can't  
5 speak specifically for the other guys who were there that  
6 night, but in my approximation, that's what we did. We got  
7 accountability for all the Americans that were on the post.  
8 We relayed our information, and we continued to relay that  
9 information, not only to Tripoli, not only to other units  
10 that were in Benghazi, but also to the Command Center in D.C.  
11 so there would be a multiprong reaction to that, and then we  
12 defended as long as we could until we were created with an  
13 opening where we could go down and try to self-recover.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. And I understand that you had only  
15 been there a day.

16 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

17 Mr. Westmoreland. So you were probably just going off  
18 of instinct at that point, but I'm assuming the people that  
19 had been there and had practiced these drills, it's hard to  
20 believe that what happened hadn't been a scenario of  
21 something that they may have talked to, planned, or whatever.  
22 I know you didn't know at the time and you didn't have any  
23 idea of it, but to me, the minute that alarm went off, those  
24 people that had trained, that had gone through the drills,  
25 would have known they should try to go somewhere, try to do

1 something specific, or I don't know what the training was  
2 for. And I know you had just gotten there, and some of the  
3 other guys had just gotten there. I'm just saying that what  
4 happened at the Annex just seems a little bit different than  
5 what went on there. And I understand the situation was a lot  
6 more chaotic, but it doesn't seem to me that there was even  
7 any effort to go into what they had been trained to do.

8 Mr. [REDACTED] Well, respectfully, sir, I would disagree  
9 with that. I would say the people at the Annex had the  
10 benefit of not having been attacked by surprise first, so  
11 they had four to five hours of advance oversight to know  
12 that, hey, we might be next, so we need to get our positions  
13 ready.

14 What happened with us at the compound happened, it was a  
15 rapidly evolving event, and I would say that the training did  
16 kick in because [REDACTED] did exactly what he had  
17 trained to do. He had secured both himself, the Ambassador,  
18 and Sean. He locked them in the safe haven. He relayed his  
19 information, and then we moved to react.

20 Now, the time it took us to react was directly based off  
21 of the overwhelming odds that we faced, but at no time during  
22 that night, and I feel like there is a perception both in  
23 books and media that we needed saving, and I would like to be  
24 very clear in this statement. I nor my colleagues needed  
25 nobody to save us that night. We are professionals. All of

1 us, with the exception of one, were combat veterans, and we  
2 reacted with our training both in DS and the military.

3 Mr. Westmoreland. My hat is off to you. I admire what  
4 you did. I think you did a great job. Was part of the  
5 training, I'm assuming because you all weren't in one group  
6 or whatever, but nobody fired a shot?

7 Mr. [REDACTED] That is correct, sir.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. Had you all been told prior to that,  
9 you know, don't play offense, just play defense?

10 Mr. [REDACTED] No, sir. I feel now, and I felt then at  
11 the time that I had the support. At that time there was not  
12 an opportunity to shoot. There was a situation, it was a  
13 moment where it was myself and [REDACTED], and we were very close  
14 quarters with an overwhelming force of armed combatants, and  
15 at that situation it would not have been the smart thing, it  
16 would not have been the tactical thing to fire your weapon at  
17 that time.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. If you had had different equipment,  
19 different weapons, would that have made a difference?

20 Mr. [REDACTED] Not in that specific situation. Now,  
21 would it have been nice in an environment like that to have  
22 some sort of light to medium machine gun, yes, it would, but  
23 in that particular situation, being attacked as quickly as we  
24 were, that type of stuff would not have been useful at the  
25 time.

1           Mr. Davis. Just quickly. You say a light to medium  
2 machine gun would have been helpful in that environment, but  
3 not the situation as it unfolded?

4           Ms. Safai. I think he said that it wouldn't have  
5 changed the situation.

6           Mr. Westmoreland. I was just going to add, I know that  
[REDACTED]

8           Mr. Harrison. Yes.

9           Mr. Westmoreland. And it seemed to clear up the  
10 situation over there. And so I'm assuming they were on a  
11 rescue mission maybe, maybe not, but it seems like the  
12 armament that they had, the weapons they had, took care of  
13 the rocket-propelled grenades and the different things that  
14 were going off. I may be wrong.

15           Mr. [REDACTED] When I was with the Annex members, when  
16 they were coming in, nobody fired their weapons. For the  
17 entire time that I was with them, there were a couple of  
18 times on the roof where there was small arms fire as a result  
19 to probing attacks, and those -- that firing was met  
20 directly, as a direct result of something a specific person  
21 in a specific location saw, not because of any type of  
22 additional equipment or additional training that they had.

23           Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.  
24  
25

1 BY MR. DAVIS:

2 Q Just three quick questions to follow-up. One,  
3 machine guns because you mentioned earlier, this situation  
4 aside, would the presence of a saw or a machine gun mounted  
5 on a roof, could that have served as a possible deterrent  
6 effect for anybody entering the compound?

7 A Again, that's a hypothetical for that situation,  
8 and I don't want to talk about a hypothetical situation for  
9 Benghazi specifically.

10 Q Question number two, you mentioned your interview  
11 with the Independent Panel on Best Practices?

12 A Yes.

13 Q How you were the only person being interviewed by  
14 the panel. Can you recall who else was in the room with you  
15 during that interview?

16 A Not specifically. I know that the -- I'm sorry.  
17 You're talking about the ARB now?

18 Q Not the ARB. You mentioned there were a lot of  
19 people. You also mentioned you were interviewed by the  
20 Independent Panel of Best Practices?

21 A Yes.

22 Q I'm referring to that one. Do you know who else  
23 was in the room with you in addition to the panel members?

24 A To my recollection, it was just myself and the  
25 panel members.

1 Q So you don't recall anybody from the Department of  
2 Justice or FBI being there at that interview?

3 A Not to my recollection.

4 Q The third question, it might be a series of very  
5 quick questions. When you were in Tripoli and Benghazi,  
6 both, was it customary for you to receive any type of daily  
7 situation, sitReps on the security status there?

8 A Any time there was a significant security concern  
9 or update, the RSO would update us.

10 Q But it wasn't customary to have something just  
11 daily as a routine?

12 A No.

13 Q Whose job was it to speak with Libya desk? Was it  
14 the RSO's job specifically?

15 A That would have been the RSO or one of his  
16 designees. It wasn't me.

17 Mr. Davis. That's all we have got.

18 Ms. Sawyer. Did you want to take a break. Let's go off  
19 the record and take 5 minutes.

20 [Recess.]

21 BY MS. SAWYER:

22 Q Okay. Mr. [REDACTED], I think we just have a few  
23 questions. I actually wanted to start for a few minutes a  
24 little bit where we ended the last hour's questioning, which  
25 was some questions about the defensive strategic decisions

1 made on the night of the attack, and I know that you've  
2 probably answered all along the way many questions about  
3 those decisions, and I just wanted to clarify on the record  
4 that it is also true that vis-à-vis the mission and the time  
5 at the compound, that it is the case that no American lives  
6 were lost as a result of any gunfire or gunshot wounds. That  
7 certainly didn't happen on the mission?

8 A Right. Correct.

9 Q You know, in the course of the 2-1/2 years since  
10 the attack and the Independent Accountability Review Board  
11 followed by, I think, we are 8th congressional investigation,  
12 there has been a lot of focus on what could have been done  
13 differently, what could have gone differently. A lot of  
14 times it isn't as recognized that I think something in the  
15 range of 12 hours, maybe a little more than 12 hours after  
16 that first attack which, as you acknowledged was a surprise  
17 to the folks at the mission and I think everywhere else, all  
18 of the personnel on the ground in Benghazi had been evacuated  
19 to Tripoli.

20 So that, from my perspective, is a tremendous success.  
21 And so I just wondered if you could share with us from your  
22 perspective, because you were there, you experienced it, some  
23 of the successes that obviously must have occurred on that  
24 night?

25 A Well, I wanted to say that in my opinion, everybody



1 performed admirably. They did their jobs. At no point was  
2 anybody unwilling or unable to do even the smallest task,  
3 whether it's hop down off the roof and go get some ammo, just  
4 whatever. That to me was tremendous. The non-security  
5 elements who were there provided as much support as they  
6 could. They went far beyond what anybody would have ever  
7 expected them to do. And then I, you know, quite honestly,  
8 we had a lot of luck, and I think those were the things that  
9 helped us out.

10 Q And you indicated when you were speaking last hour  
11 that you were on the first plane that was evacuated from  
12 Benghazi to Tripoli?

13 A Yes.

14 Q And one of your colleagues, I believe Mr. [REDACTED],  
15 who was with us earlier in the week, was also on that plane?

16 A Yes, I was.

17 Q And it's our understanding that he suffered some  
18 pretty serious injuries in the attack at the Annex?

19 A Yes, he did.

20 Q Can you explain or share with us -- we have also  
21 heard, but I haven't really had an opportunity to hear  
22 directly from someone who may have witnessed some pretty  
23 heroic efforts and successful efforts thankfully to preserve  
24 his life, particularly once you guys had reached Tripoli.  
25 Can you talk with us a little about that?

1           A     Sure. We can -- there was -- I mean, there were a  
2     couple of injured from the mortar attacks. [REDACTED] was one of  
3     them. The other was one of the GRS members. And very  
4     quickly upon bringing them in, people started rendering aid.  
5     I will say, one of the things that diplomatic security does  
6     well is their medical training, and as part of high threat  
7     was a tactical care course, which, at least from my  
8     perspective, was a very good comprehensive course and was  
9     also a very good refresher for me of combat care that I  
10    received in the Army. So I found those things to be  
11    extremely helpful. Tremendous efforts were made to control  
12    bleeding, splint injuries, give morphine, and then both the  
13    Embassy support staff in Tripoli who met the airplane and  
14    then the doctors in Tripoli, in my opinion, were, you know,  
15    they saved [REDACTED] leg.

16           Q     Now, as we noted, you talked with the  
17    Accountability Review Board and were interviewed by them.  
18    You indicated earlier when I asked you when I first talked to  
19    you some hours ago now, that you had seen the unclassified  
20    ARB report, and you had read through it, but you indicated to  
21    me that you had not read it that carefully. Was there a  
22    reason why you didn't read it more carefully?

23           A     Well, I mean, twofold. This being not the most  
24    pleasant experience of my life, I would like to put it behind  
25    me. And then, two, I was comfortable with the actions that I

1 took and the actions that my colleagues took. So with  
2 respect to the, you know, to the commission with that, I was  
3 confident in our actions, and I wasn't inclined to read it.

4 Q And when you spoke with them, did you feel  
5 perfectly free to share with them all of the information  
6 based on your experience in Benghazi? Was there anything  
7 that you felt you needed to or did hold back from the  
8 information you gave them?

9 A I was provided the opportunity to talk. They  
10 listened to the -- they asked me questions. They listened to  
11 the answers that I gave. It's not an experience that I would  
12 like to repeat multiple times through the course of my  
13 career.

14 Q There have been some allegations that there were  
15 instructions given to people to potentially withhold  
16 information. Were you ever instructed by anyone to withhold  
17 information from the Independent Accountability Review Board?

18 A No.

19 Q Were you ever instructed to withhold information  
20 from anyone you spoke to about the attacks in your official  
21 capacity, including this congressional committee?

22 A No.

23 Q Were you ever asked or directed not to turn over  
24 documents or other evidence to the Independent Accountability  
25 Review Board?

1 A No.

2 Q To any congressional committee?

3 A No.

4 Q Now I'm very pleased that the ranking member was  
5 able to join us. He had been hoping to get here a little  
6 earlier, but some hearings delayed him, but I know that he's  
7 very gratified to be able to get to meet you, one. And also,  
8 rest assured we will debrief him as well as the other  
9 members. They also have access to your transcripts. Again,  
10 all of them are very grateful for your willingness to come in  
11 and talk with us, and I think all of them understand your  
12 desire to be able to move on.

13 Before I turn it over to the ranking member, one  
14 question that I have for you, in light of that is for any  
15 guidance that you might be able to give the committee as to  
16 whether you think there is really any stone unturned here  
17 that we need to be examining?

18 A No, no.

19 Mr. Cummings. Mr. [REDACTED] I want to thank you very  
20 much. I heard what you said about having to go, you don't  
21 want to relive this, and I can certainly understand that, but  
22 first of all, on behalf of the majority and minority, I want  
23 to thank you, first of all, for your service, and I know that  
24 you've been through a lot. And we really do appreciate you  
25 being here, and we appreciate what you have been through with

1        regard to trying to make sure that we maintain this democracy  
2        that we have in this country and doing our diplomatic duties  
3        and responsibilities overseas.

4            The bravery that you've shown and so many others, we can  
5        never thank you enough, and I want you to be very clear that  
6        we are very sensitive to what this, all of this has put you  
7        through and perhaps your family.

8            And so, I am just curious, one of the things that  
9        happened when we met with the families, and we met with  
10       family members from each of the deceased members of our  
11       Diplomatic Corps. All of them said two things: One, they  
12       said try to keep the politics out of this. But they also  
13       said something else, and that is try to do everything in your  
14       power to get to the truth; and if there are things that you  
15       can do as a Congress to minimize these types of incidents  
16       from happening again, to do that. And so I say all that to  
17       say, is there anything that you, when looking back, would  
18       want us to inquire about or anything that you when you look  
19       back, things that you would want us to look into?

20           Mr. [REDACTED] No.

21           Mr. Cummings. And with regard to your family, we, back  
22       in October, one of your colleagues, I had an opportunity to  
23       sit in on his deposition, and he expressed concern for his  
24       family and for himself because he was a witness. And so, you  
25       know, I understand that your name has not been publicly

1 mentioned, but do you worry about that? Does that concern  
2 you?

3 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes. Based on the nature of my job, I  
4 would not like my name released. It's something that I worry  
5 about, and it's something that periodically, you know, I do  
6 run Google searches with my name in relation to Benghazi to  
7 see if anything pops up with that.

8 Mr. Cummings. So what, maybe every month or so, you do  
9 a Google search?

10 Mr. [REDACTED] Every couple months, every time I think  
11 about it, when something new about Benghazi comes up, when  
12 the book came out, I Googled some stuff just to see.

13 Mr. Cummings. What is your main worry, your main  
14 concern?

15 Mr. [REDACTED] Well, [REDACTED]  
16 [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED] because of me  
18 or my job.

19 Mr. Cummings. Well, again, everything that we can do to  
20 make sure that you and your family are safe, we will do. I  
21 just think it is so important that we do that. And, again, I  
22 want to thank you very much, and, you know, I wish you well.

23 Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

24 BY MS. SAWYER:

25 Q So when we talked earlier, and I was asking you a

1 little bit about the success stories and the fact that there  
2 was evacuation ultimately and that everyone in Benghazi was  
3 evacuated shortly after the mortar attacks; and you had  
4 talked about your location most of that night, and it sounded  
5 like you had been on the roof most of the night until right  
6 before those attacks?

7 A Yes.

8 Q And were you involved -- would you have been  
9 involved in the actual conversations about any evacuation  
10 planning?

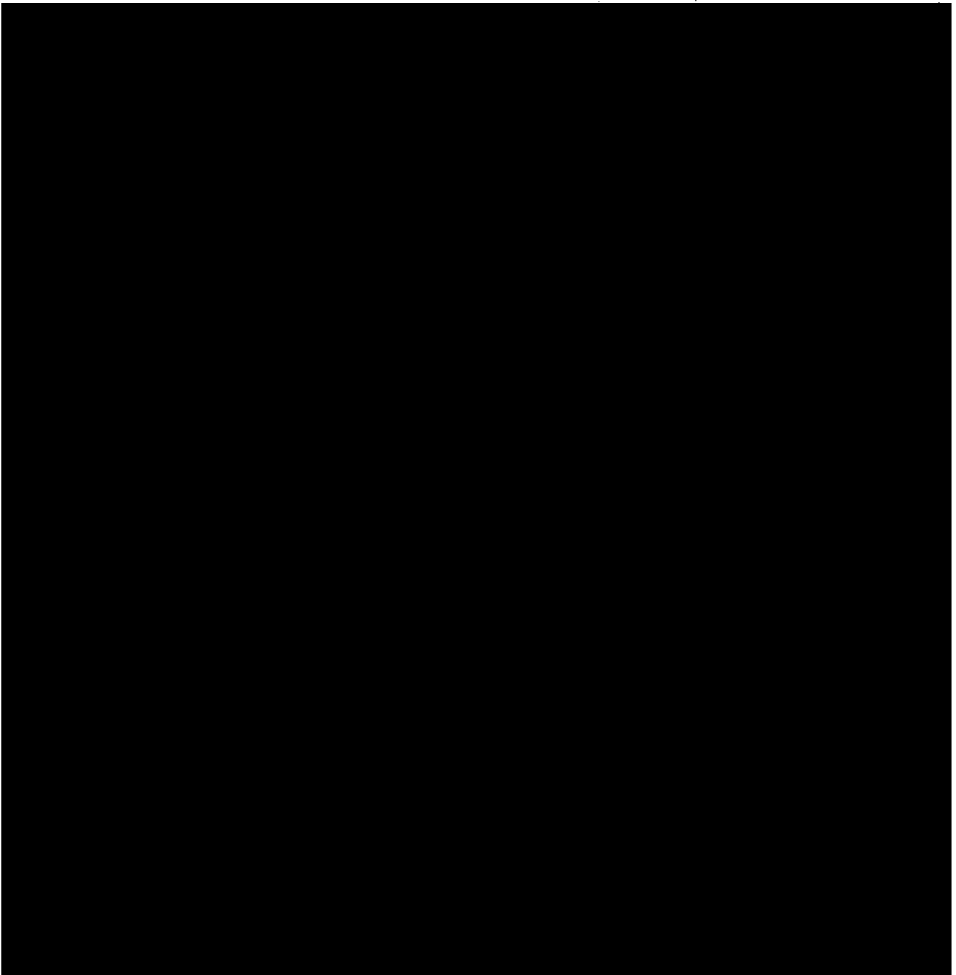
11 A I was not. To the extent that I made phone calls  
12 to get some information about atmospherics and relayed that  
13 information to them, that was the extent that I played in the  
14 decision-making process.

15 Q And that was in the contingency that a decision was  
16 made that evacuation was appropriate and at what point that  
17 became appropriate?

18 A Yes, based on, I mean, there's only a certain  
19 amount of time you can stay in a position that is known and  
20 that is actively under attack before you need to leave or you  
21 will become a victim of whatever is happening. So should  
22 that decision point have been approaching to see what our  
23 options were.

24 Q And you, yourself, were not involved in the actual  
25 conversations about the decision to evacuate?

1                   A       No.



22                   Q       So during the last hour when we were talking about  
23                   some of the strategic decisions that had been reviewed, you  
24                   specifically mentioned that you are aware certainly that  
25                   there has been public discussion, including, as you



1 referenced, a book. I was curious as to whether or not you  
2 had read the book 13 Hours?

3 A I've read the majority of the book, yes.

4 Q And were you ever approached or interviewed for  
5 that book?

6 A No.

7 Q And is there anything that you feel in particular  
8 you'd like to respond to that was in that book?

9 A I mean, there, in my opinion, were some glaring  
10 inaccuracies in that book, and I think it is a phenomenal  
11 work of fiction, and I guess I'll leave it at that.

12 Q Are there any in particular that you would like to  
13 clarify just for the record, in terms of what you perceive or  
14 have characterized as inaccuracies?

15 A Relatively speaking, I am neither young nor naive,  
16 and that impression that is given us, well-intentioned but  
17 inexperienced, I very much have contention with.

18 Q So with regard to some of the descriptions of, in  
19 particular, you and the DS team and both your level of  
20 experience, what about characterizations about decisions that  
21 were made that night, is there anything in particular that  
22 you would like to clarify in that regard?

23 A As far as the decisions that I made and the rest of  
24 the DS agents that were there, I stand behind the decisions  
25 that I made that night, and retrospect with the information I

1 had at the time, I would likely make the same decisions. And  
2 anybody can, you know, Monday-morning quarterback, but in the  
3 moment, in the action, I feel like we did the right thing.

4 Q Another portion of that book that has gotten a lot  
5 of attention in the public domain is the allegation that the  
6 team coming from the Annex was unreasonably delayed. Did you  
7 ever have a conversation with anyone while you were either in  
8 Benghazi, which would have had to have been that night?

9 A Right.

10 Q Or in Libya about the alleged delay?

11 A It is true that there was a, from my perception of  
12 events, a significant amount of time that passed before like  
13 people came. Now, I feel like that's twofold. One is when  
14 you are getting shot at, it takes literally 30 seconds before  
15 the check engine light comes on, and you don't want to be in  
16 there anymore.

17 And then, two, is logistically, I used the phrase  
18 before, it's rush to failure. And those guys can't just take  
19 the most direct line in and be John Rambo and shoot their way  
20 through and get us out. It takes time to plan. And as long  
21 it took them to come, my understanding at the time was they  
22 got there as fast as they could.

23 Q And when you described some of the decision-making  
24 that you all did on the compound that night, you did use that  
25 term "rush to failure," and the way you described it is that

1 it would both be prudent in order to make sure that you were  
2 undertaking the best tactical decision and to make an  
3 assessment, I think, of what was happening around you in  
4 order to do so. If that had been at least a reason for the  
5 delay, would that have been a bad reason in your assessment?

6 A No.

7 Q And when you were describing the book, you referred  
8 to it as a work of fiction?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Why did you use that particular characterization?

11 A It was probably me being fairly overcritical of the  
12 book, but I did not feel as if we were depicted as  
13 professionals on equal footing. People who do this  
14 throughout the world and who have had, like everybody that  
15 night had experience, though none of us had been in DS for  
16 decades; we had all had experience in security and combat and  
17 combat zones, and I think that we were anything but  
18 inexperienced.

19 Q That point that you've just made and in terms of  
20 DS's critical role and really helping the State Department do  
21 the critical diplomacy work that it does throughout the world  
22 was one that the ARB also made and made several times. And I  
23 just wanted to ask your opinion on something that the ARB  
24 recognized and spoke to, and particularly because you're  
25 someone who was truly on the front lines with regard to this.

1     So one of the recognitions that the ARB made was that DS  
2     overall has done a fine job protecting thousands of employees  
3     in some 273 diplomatic missions around the world.

4             No diplomatic presence is without risk given past  
5     attempts by terrorists to pursue U.S. targets worldwide. The  
6     total elimination of risk is a non-starter for U.S. diplomacy  
7     given the need for the U.S. Government to be present in  
8     places where stability and security are often most profoundly  
9     lacking, and host government support is sometimes minimal to  
10    non-existent.

11            And as I said you were really on the front lines on  
12    this, on doing this and allowing the State Department to  
13    carry out diplomacy on behalf of the United States.

14            Do you still believe that's an important thing for the  
15    United States to be able to do?

16            A     Diplomacy?

17            Q     Yes. Even in places that are dangerous.

18            A     Yes. I think that, you know, America as a country  
19    has never really shied away from a challenge, and it's  
20    important for us to carry on the mission of the U.S.  
21    Government, wherever that mission takes us.

22            Q     So shifting gears, and just covering what will be a  
23    number of different topics, you know, we have referenced a  
24    number of times the fact that we're now into the eighth  
25    congressional investigation. This committee is very

1 committed to doing everything we can to make this the last  
2 investigation. Part of that is exploring a number of  
3 allegations, some of which you will have firsthand knowledge  
4 of having been there, some of which you may or may not, but  
5 our goal really here is to chase down all of the allegations,  
6 find out what we can. It's easy to speculate. A lot of  
7 people have. But you're someone with firsthand knowledge,  
8 and we really do want to explore and put to rest all of the  
9 allegations that we can.

10 So I'm going to ask you a series of questions about  
11 allegations and just ask whether you have any evidence of any  
12 of them?

13 A Okay.

14 Q It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton  
15 intentionally blocked military action on the night of the  
16 attacks. One Congressman has speculated that "Secretary  
17 Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down." And this resulted  
18 in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in  
19 Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State  
20 Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on  
21 the night of the attacks?

22 A No.

23 Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State  
24 Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense  
25 Panetta on the night of the attacks?

1           A     No.

2           Q     It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
3       personally signed in April 2012 cable denying security to  
4       Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim  
5       and gave it "four Pinocchios," its highest award for false  
6       claims. Nonetheless, some allegations have persisted that  
7       this was the truth. Do you have any evidence that Secretary  
8       Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying  
9       security resources to Libya?

10          A     No.

11          Q     Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was  
12       personally involved in providing specific instruction on  
13       day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

14          A     No.

15          Q     It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
16       misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
17       by General Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner  
18       support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011. Do  
19       you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented  
20       or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to  
21       his own people in order to garner support for military  
22       operations in Libya in spring 2011?

23          A     No.

24          Q     It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in  
25       Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to

1 other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House  
2 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that "The  
3 CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to  
4 Syria," and that they found "no support for this allegation."  
5 Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence  
6 Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not  
7 shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

8 A No.

9 Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities  
10 in Benghazi, including the mission compound, were being used  
11 to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any  
12 other foreign country?

13 A No.

14 Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily  
15 delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special  
16 Mission Compound, and there have been a number of allegations  
17 about the cause and the appropriateness of that delay. The  
18 House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report  
19 concluding that the team was not ordered to "stand down," but  
20 that instead there were tactical disagreements on the ground  
21 over how quickly to depart. Do you have any evidence that  
22 would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding  
23 that there was no stand-down order to CIA personnel?

24 A No.

25 Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the

1 decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right  
2 decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or  
3 improper reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA  
4 security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the  
5 Special Mission Compound?

6 A No.

7 Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in  
8 the course of producing documents to Accountability Review  
9 Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed  
10 out of that production. Do you have any evidence that anyone  
11 at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging  
12 documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

13 A No.

14 Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
15 Department directed anyone else at the State Department to  
16 remove or scrub damaging document from the materials that  
17 were provided to the ARB?

18 A No.

19 Q Let me ask the same questions for documents  
20 provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone  
21 at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging  
22 documents from the materials that were provided to Congress  
23 or directed anyone to do so?

24 A No.

25 Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Mike



1 Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi  
2 attacks for political reasons, and that he then  
3 misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA  
4 "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the  
5 highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship." Do  
6 you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell  
7 gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress  
8 about the Benghazi talking points?

9 A No.

10 Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director  
11 Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for  
12 political reasons?

13 A No.

14 Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice  
15 made, "intentional misrepresentations" when she spoke on the  
16 Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks. Do you have  
17 any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally  
18 misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday  
19 talk shows?

20 A No.

21 Q It has been alleged that the President of the  
22 United States was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief on the  
23 night of the attacks and that he was missing in action. Do  
24 you have any evidence to support the allegation that the  
25 President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or missing

1 in action on the night of the attacks?

2 A No.

3 Q It has been alleged that a team of four military  
4 personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who  
5 were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were  
6 ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease  
7 all operations. Military officials have stated that those  
8 four individuals were instead ordered to remain in place in  
9 Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their  
10 current location.

11 A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed  
12 Services Committee found that "There was no stand-down order  
13 issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to  
14 join the fight in Benghazi." Do you have any evidence to  
15 contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services  
16 Committee that "There was no stand-down order issued to U.S.  
17 military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in  
18 Benghazi"?

19 A Benghazi.

20 Q It has been alleged that the military failed to  
21 deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have  
22 saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard  
23 "Buck" McKeon, former chair of the House Armed Services  
24 Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after which he  
25 stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing

1 all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably  
2 couldn't have done more than we did." Do you have any  
3 evidence to contradict Congress McKeon's conclusion?

4 A No.

5 Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had  
6 military assets available to them on the night of the attacks  
7 that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership  
8 intentionally decided not to deploy?

9 A No.

10 Ms. Sawyer. Again, Mr. [REDACTED] we thank you for your  
11 appearing before the committee today, and we all thank you as  
12 you've heard, for your tremendous service to the country. I  
13 think it's fair to say we often hear about American heroes.  
14 We don't often get a chance to meet them, so thank you for  
15 giving some of us that opportunity.

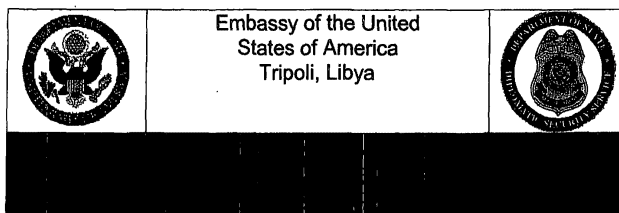
16 Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

17 Ms. Safai. Before we go off the record, I just wanted  
18 to thank the committee again for their commitment to protect  
19 the names of Mr. [REDACTED] and his colleagues. We appreciate  
20 that.

21 [Whereupon, at 3:15 p.m., the interview was concluded.]  
22  
23  
24  
25

## EXHIBIT 1

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.



Date: September 3, 2012

To: All Mission Employees

From: RSO — [REDACTED]

Through: CDA — Gregory Hicks

Subject: Off Compound Movements

**OFF COMPOUND MOVEMENTS**

Given the current security environment it is very important for Embassy Personnel to limit their exposure in the city. To that end, when scheduling meetings please follow the following guidance.

1. Schedule as many meeting as possible during business hours, preferably at the CMR (Embassy Office Compound). Also keep in mind; you can have guests come to the Villas (Residential Compound) for lunch and dinner.
2. There are some meetings that cannot be scheduled for the CMR. These meetings should be scheduled at appropriate offices and not in public areas like coffee shops, hotels or restaurants.
3. Schedule meetings as closely as possible to eliminate large gaps between meetings.
4. Meetings during the hours of darkness are discouraged and will be evaluated by the DCM on a case by case basis. When scheduling meeting please try to allow enough time to return to the compound before dark.

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5. When out in the city, avoid unscheduled stops. Do not become a creature of habit and ask the driver to stop at places you visit often. Limit your travel to scheduled locations and do not make last minute changes.

#### **SCHEDULING PERSONAL TRIPS**

Trips to the grocery store, markets or dry cleaners can be scheduled with GSO. The motor pool will schedule randomized visits for all COM personal. Please refer to the schedule. Other trips to the markets need to be planned in advance to ensure there are enough vehicles and security coverage.

For out of the city travel to visit landmarks or go to the beach, the trip needs to be scheduled ahead of time. To schedule such trips please follow the following guidelines.

1. Inform the DCM that you would like to make a personal trip and receive his concurrence.
2. Submit an e-services request to confirm there are vehicles available.
3. Confirm with RSO to ensure that there is adequate staffing to support the trip and that the area is secure. For trips out of the city we need to know at least 24 hours in advance, but keep in mind, it may take longer than 24 hours to ensure the area is clear so the sooner you inform the RSO the better. If the security situation is deemed unsafe, the trip will be canceled.

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#### **POST TRAVEL POLICY**

Post is in the process of reviewing the travel policy. An updated security directive will be distributed that will have all the travel guidelines in it. The travel policy will change as the security in country changes.

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## EXHIBIT 2

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 8:39 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]@gmail.com; [REDACTED] (DCHA/OTI); [REDACTED] (TRIPOLI RSO); [REDACTED] (TRIPOLI TDY); [REDACTED] Stevens, John C; [REDACTED] (tripoli temp); Hicks, Gregory N;  
**Cc:** [REDACTED] stephen.gibson  
**Subject:** DCM's Schedule- September 9, 2012  
**Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**SensitivityCode:** Sensitive  
**SMARTCategory:** Working

**DCM'S SCHEDULE**  
**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2012**

8:30 AM – 9:00 AM Huddle w/ AMB  
 Villa 2

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM Expanded Country Team Meeting/ Visa Referral  
Briefing  
 Villa 2

10:00 AM – 10:30 AM Meeting RE: Benghazi Trip  
 Villa 2 Dining Room

10:30 AM – 10:45 AM Depart from Villas to CMR

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM Depart CMR for Villas

12:30 PM – 1:00 PM Read Time  
 Villas

1:00 PM – 1:15 PM Depart Villas for CMR

1:30 PM – 2:00 PM NEA Call

3:00 PM – 3:30 PM Meeting RE: Review Embassy Maps/Plans  
 (+ [REDACTED])  
 CMR

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM Safehaven Drill  
 CMR

4:00 PM – 5:00 PM Weekly Security Meeting

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### CMR Back Kitchen

SBU

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

## EXHIBIT 3

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

September 8, 16:32

**Ambassador Chris Stevens  
Benghazi, Libya: September 10-14**

Control officer	Other useful numbers
██████████ U.S. Special Mission Benghazi	A/PO Benghazi ██████████
██████████ @yahoo.com	Acting RSO Benghazi ██████████
	A/RSO ██████████
	A/RSO ██████████
	A/RSO ██████████

**Monday, 10 September**

1115      **Arrival: Benghazi Benina International Airport from Tripoli**  
 Ambassador Stevens, A/RSO ██████████; A/RSO ██████████  
 (Note: This flight consistently arrives one to two hours late)  
 Greeted by ██████████ A/RSOs ██████████ and ██████████  
 (Confirmed)

TBC      Motorcade Departs Benghazi Benina ert to U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBC + 20      Arrival U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

1300      **Lunch and Briefing: ██████████ Schedule Orientation and Benghazi Events**  
 Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi  
 (Confirmed)

1400      **Briefing: ██████████**  
 Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi ██████████ call to coordinate exact time)  
 (Confirmed)

1600      **Meeting: Benghazi Local Council**  
Participants: ██████████ + Ten Members of Benghazi Council  
 Location: Fadeel Hotel; POC: Hotel Owner ██████████  
 (Confirmed)

1800      **Dinner: Hosted by Fadeel Hotel Owner ██████████**  
Participants: ██████████  
 Location: Fadeel Hotel; POC: Hotel Owner ██████████  
 (Confirmed)

2030      **Return to Base; Rest of Night - Villa A; Master bedroom**  
 Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

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September 8, 16:32

**Tuesday, 11 September (9/11)**

PATRIOT DAY AND NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE AND REMEMBRANCE 2012; FLAGS AT HALF-STAFF

09:00      **Breakfast w/ [REDACTED]**  
Location: Cafeteria, U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBD 11:00      **Meeting: [REDACTED] February 17 Brigade**  
Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBD Noon      **Lunch**  
Location: TBD

14:00      **Meeting: [REDACTED]**  
Almarfa Shipping and Maritime Services Co.  
Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi  
(Confirmed [REDACTED] also offered to host you for dinner at anytime during your visit)

TBD PM      **Meeting: [REDACTED]**  
Location: TBD

TBD PM      **Meeting: [REDACTED]**  
Location: TBD

RON

**Wednesday, 12 September**

TBD      **Breakfast at Leisure**  
Location: Cafeteria, U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBD AM      **Meeting: Arabian Gulf Oil Company (AGOCO)**  
[REDACTED]  
Location: AGOCO Headquarters

1115      **Arrival: [REDACTED] - Benghazi Benina International Airport from Tripoli**  
(Note: This flight consistently arrives one to two hours late)  
Greeted by A/RSO  
(Confirmed)

TBD      [REDACTED] Motorcade Departs Benghazi Benina ert to U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBD + 20      [REDACTED] Arrival U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

Noon- TBD      **Afternoon reserved for Chemonics/OTI orchestrated meetings**

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September 8, 16:32

(Possible meetings include Chemonics head [REDACTED] plus Amcib Public International Law Group contractors, civil society actors involved with constitution/transition issues, and women NGO leaders/civil society activists  
 POC: [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Chemonics

1300 Possible Lunch Event: USAID and MEPI Grantees?  
 Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi Cafeteria  
 POC: [REDACTED]  
 Please provide list of potential invitees and contact information  
 Chemonics - [REDACTED]

Thursday, 13 September

TBD **Breakfast at Leisure**  
 Ambassador + [REDACTED]  
 Location: Cafeteria, U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBD **Meeting: President, Benghazi University (Name?)**  
 Location: Benghazi University  
 Purpose: Highlight exchange programs, especially special Fulbright scholars program, and ask about BU's partnership with University of South Carolina.  
 POC: [REDACTED]  
 (Pending MFA) [REDACTED] arranging with Benghazi University)

TBD Lunch

1600 **Opening Ceremony: American Space**  
 Location: American Corner  
 Purpose: Highlight US engagement in Benghazi through AC and benefits of AC for youth: English language, cultural programs, info on studying in US, access to Internet resources and books. This is a media event.  
 American Space POC: [REDACTED]  
 Embassy POC: [REDACTED]  
 (Realistically, ceremony may not start until 1630)

:00 Photo Montage Repeating in Background  
 :00 Guest Arrivals - Proceed to American Space main room  
 :05 Students - Pre-Positioned Behind Ambassador podium/desk  
 :10 Abd Al-Aziz Al-Saidi - Master of Ceremonies Introduction  
 :12 Director [REDACTED] - Remarks  
 :17 Ambassador's remarks (POC: [REDACTED])  
 :22 MOU Signing Ceremony - Ambassador + [REDACTED]  
 :24 Master of Ceremonies - Invites Guests Downstairs; Guests Proceed  
 :28 Entertainment - Libyan Disabled Student (Rapper)  
 :32 Entertainment - Libyan Student (Country Singer)  
 :34 Reception  
 :00 End of Ceremony/Reception

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September 8, 16:32

1730      **Return to Base**

TBD      **Dinner at Leisure**  
Location: Cafeteria, U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

**Friday, 14 September**

TBD      **Breakfast at Leisure**  
Ambassador + [REDACTED]  
Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi

TBD      **Roundtable with Benghazi-based journalists**  
Location: U.S. Special Mission Benghazi  
Purpose: Build relationships with Eastern Libyan media; deliver message about key US priorities and activities.  
People: 5-6 journalists, on the record but no recording devices.  
POC: [REDACTED]

TBD      Lunch

1600      **RTB; Pick up luggage**

1630      **Depart U.S. Special Mission Benghazi ert to Benina International Airport**

1730      **Wheels Up: Ambassador Stevens**  
+ PAO [REDACTED]  
+ A/RSO [REDACTED]  
+ A/RSO [REDACTED]

**Contacts:**

**Turkish Consul General** [REDACTED]  
Location: Turkish Consulate  
[REDACTED]

**Egyptian Consul General** [REDACTED]  
Location: Egyptian Consulate

**Italian Consul General** [REDACTED]  
Location: Italian Consul Office

**Finland Honorary Consul** [REDACTED]  
+ Honorary Consul of Sweden [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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**INTERVIEW OF  
DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #22**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 24, 2015

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## APPEARANCES

### FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

DANA CHIPMAN, *Chief Counsel*

SHARON JACKSON, *Deputy Chief Counsel*

MARK GRIDER, *Deputy General Counsel*

SARA BARRINEAU, *Investigator*

HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*

RONAK DESAI, *Minority Counsel*

KENDAL ROBINSON, *Minority Detailee*

BRENT WOOLFORK, *Minority Senior Professional Staff*

### FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*

Mr. Grider. We are on the record. This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED], conducted by The House Select Committee on Benghazi. This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks on the U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and related matters pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress, and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Special Agent [REDACTED], could you please state your full name for the record.

Mr. [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Mr. Grider. On behalf of the committee, we appreciate your time and your willingness to come and talk to us today. My name is Mark Grider. I'm one of the counsels on the committee's majority staff, and I would like to go around the room and have everybody introduce themselves for the record. We will start with you.

Mr. Westmoreland. Lynn Westmoreland, representing Georgia's 3rd District.

Ms. Jackson. Sharon Jackson, counsel with the majority staff.

Mr. Desai. Ronak Desai, counsel with the minority staff.

Ms. Robinson. Kendal Robinson, with the minority.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority.

Mr. Woolfork. Brent Woolfork on the minority staff.

Ms. Barrineau. Sara Barrineau with the majority staff.

Mr. Chipman. I'm Dana Chipman with the majority staff.

Mr. Evers. Austin Evers, State Department.

Mr. Grider. Okay, thank you, everyone. As I mentioned, I would like to go over just some brief ground rules. It may take a few moments here. So, the way questioning proceeds, is that a member from the majority will ask questions first for up to 1 hour. And then the minority will have an opportunity to ask questions for an equal amount of time, if they so choose. We will adhere to the 1-hour time limit for each side. Questions may only be asked by a member of the committee or a designated staff member. We will rotate back and forth, 1 hour per side, until we are out of questions and the interview will be over.

Now, during your career, you may have had an opportunity to testify in a deposition, Federal Court, even State court; maybe not. But this is a little different. The committee format is not bound by the rules of evidence. So, we may ask your opinion on things. We may ask hearsay, and all of that is admissible in a transcribed interview before a congressional committee.

The witness or your counsel may raise objections for privilege, subject to the review of the chairman of the committee. If these objections cannot be resolved in the interview, the witness can be required to return for a deposition, or hearing. Members and staff of the committee, however, are not permitted to raise objections when the other side is asking questions. So, you won't hear any interruptions. This won't be in a courtroom setting. This has not been an issue we have encountered in the past, but I just wanted to make sure you understand and you are clear on the process.

This session is to begin as unclassified. If any question calls



for a classified answer, please let us know, and we will reserve the answer until we are moved into a classified setting. In preparing for your interview, I don't believe any of my questions will go into classified information based on the documents that I reviewed, but if you feel it does, please confer or talk to your counsel, and we can handle as is.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

Mr. Grider. You are welcome to confer with your counsel at any time throughout the interview, but if something needs to be clarified, we ask that the witness make this known. If you need to discuss anything with your counsel we will go off the record, stop the clock to provide you this opportunity.

We will also take a break whenever it is convenient for you. This can be after every hour of questioning, or after a couple of rounds, whatever you prefer. During a round of questioning if you need anything, a glass of water, soda, coffee, or just to talk to your counsel, please let us know. Our goal is to make you comfortable, to be conversational, and just to get the facts.

As you can see to your right, an official court reporter is taking -- official reporter is taking down everything you say to make a written record, so we ask that you give verbal responses, yes and no, as opposed to the nods of the head so that she can take that down. And I'm going to ask the reporter to please feel free to jump in at any time that I'm talking too fast, or you don't understand something that we said.

Also, and I sometimes have trouble with this, we are going to try not to talk over each other. You know, we want you to answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner as possible. I don't think -- I think we have turned off the clock, but sometimes there is a buzz that goes on that signals something for Congress. We will just pause until the buzz is over, and then we can continue going, but just don't be shocked by that.

We will take your our time and repeat or clarify our questions if necessary. If you have any questions or you don't understand any of our questions, please let us know. We will be more than happy to clarify or repeat our questions. We also want to be clear -- we want a clear understanding of what you know from your time in Benghazi, Libya, so we are going to ask you to give us your best recollection. We understand that a number of years have passed and things may not be necessarily crystal clear. If you honestly don't know the answer to a question or do not remember, it is best not to guess. Please give us your best recollection, and if things you do not know or can't remember, just say so, and please inform us who, to the best of your knowledge, may be able to provide a more complete answer to the question.

I'm going to ask you some questions here. Do you understand that you have an obligation to answer questions from Congress truthfully?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Mr. Grider. This also applies to questions posed by congressional staff in an interview. Do you understand that?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Grider. Witnesses that knowingly provide false testimony could be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury or for making false statements. Do you understand this?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Grider. Is there any reason you are unable to provide truthful answers to today's questions?

Mr. [REDACTED] Nope.

Mr. Grider. Okay. All right, so that ends my preamble. Before we go to the minority, anything on the majority staff that I left out? Okay, minority.

Ms. Sawyer. No thanks. We are set.

Mr. Grider. All right, so this is the trick here. I think the clock reads, we will go at 10:10. And I have got my colleagues helping me out on the 1 hour timeframe.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Agent, or special agent?

A Special agent.

Q Okay, very good.

A Thank you.

Q All right, Special Agent [REDACTED], can you just give me your background, just your career background, all the way up to DS before we get to the DS?

A Prior to providing security, I got my Master's Degree in

[REDACTED]. After that, I joined the [REDACTED], served as a [REDACTED] volunteer over in [REDACTED] for 2 years. At which point a grant I wrote got funded by the E.U., so I stayed on for an extra year and managed that grant.

Shortly after that, I went to work at U.S. Embassy [REDACTED] as a grants officer, and then at that point that's when I got a training date with the Diplomatic Security.

Q Okay, and when did you get the training date from the Dip Security?

A Do you mean when I started, or when I got notified?

Q Yeah, when did you get notified, approximately?

A I got a job offer approximately March, 2010.

Q Okay, and then when did you start?

A [REDACTED] 2010.

Q Okay. When were you in Benghazi?

A I was in Benghazi approximately May 29, 30, through the end of July, give or take a day on either end.

Q And what type of assignment were you on?

A I was a -- it was a temporary duty assignment as an Assistant Regional Security Officer.

Q Okay. And were you recruited or did you volunteer? How did that come about?

A I volunteered. There was a request put out by Diplomatic Security for volunteers, and I volunteered for it.

Q And had you done any other TDYs prior to Benghazi?

A Prior to that, I did a protective operations TDY to our U.S. Consulate in Erbil.

Q And how long were you there?

A It was a 45-day TDY.

Q And what was the date on that, approximately?

A Approximately October-November 2011.

Q And where are you based?

A I'm currently based [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].

Q So, when you did the protective detail in Erbil between that and Benghazi, were you back in D.C. during that time?

A No, sir, during that time I was at the [REDACTED] field office.

Q Okay, and what was your role there?

A My role there was as a special agent just conducting visa, passport fraud, supporting the office, whether through criminal cases, or protective operations.

Q Okay. Very good. Okay. All right, anything else in your background that you would like us to know?

A No.

Q Okay, good. All right, high-threat training. Can you explain to everyone here, what is high-threat training? What does that entail?

A High-threat training is a training course put out by our Diplomatic Security Training Center. It prepares us to operate in

high-threat environments.

Q Okay, and did you take that course?

A Yes, sir, I did.

Q And approximately when?

A I would best guess, sir, it would be July, August 2011.

Q Okay.

A I think so.

Q So did you -- okay, 2011. Did you take -- do you recall if you took that course prior to going to Libya?

A Yes, sir.

Q Okay. Are there special requirements when you undertake motorcades or movements in high-threat areas versus more stable areas?

A I don't say there is requirements. I would not say that there is requirements for it.

Q Okay. Okay. All right, so, can you tell us when you got to Benghazi, can you explain how you got there? Can you sort of walk us through so, May of 2012, so, what was your sort of preparation and how did you get there?

A Email came out. I volunteered for the assignment. They saw that I had completed a high-threat training course, and from there, put my name forward. A desk officer in Washington, D.C. headquarters put me on assignment. Then from there, just a matter of logistics.

Q So, did you fly -- were you in [REDACTED] at the time?

A Yes, sir. I flew from [REDACTED] to Istanbul, and then Istanbul overnight, and from there, into Benghazi.

Q And was that a commercial flight?

A Yes, sir, commercial air all the way.

Q Okay. And so once you arrived in Benghazi, can you tell us the people that were there, and we are all sort of -- I'm sort of new to the State Department, so just who were some of the individuals that were there initially when you landed?

A Initially when I landed, sir, I believe it was the principal officer at the time was [REDACTED]. The IMO was [REDACTED].

Q Okay. Can you for the record, what does IMO stand for?

A I'm sorry, information management officer.

Q Okay, thank you. And go ahead, what was the name?

A And his name was [REDACTED]. There was an Assistant Regional Security Officer there named [REDACTED]. Who were they? There were two others. I believe at the time, [REDACTED] was -- he was the RSO, but I don't know if he arrived the same day as me, or day after, but our arrivals were within a couple of days of each other.

Q Okay. Okay. So, who was -- so who was the RSO? If your arrivals were contemporaneous, who was the RSO that was there on the ground or had that RSO left?

A The RSO that actually I remember was [REDACTED]. If there was, there would have been an acting RSO, and I'm not sure who that person was.

Q Do you recall if any of these individuals rotated out while you were there?

A Oh, yes, sir, they all did.

Q Okay. Were there other Government agencies present, and this can be a yes, no, when you were there?

A That -- can we talk about that at the classified level, or --

Q Just yes, no. I mean --

A Yes.

Q Okay. All right. Approximately how many, just to be clear, how many DS agents were there when you arrived?

A When I arrived it was a transition period, but to my best recollection, there was about three of us.

Q Okay. And to your knowledge, do you know if they may have taken the high-threat training, they were required to take that training?

A I don't specifically recall.

Q Okay. Do you know if there are any other Western countries or other entities that were there, present in Benghazi, when you were there?

A Yes, sir.

Q Can you tell us which ones?

A There was -- the United Kingdom had a presence there. Turkey had a presence. The French had a presence there. Swedes had a presence there, and I believe the Italians had a presence there as well.

Q Okay. Are you familiar with the name [REDACTED]?



A Yes, sir.

Q Okay. Can you tell us -- can you tell us about him? What do you know about him?

A I knew that he was from Benghazi, and he was a -- had worked for the U.S. Mission in Libya at some point, while I was there, and then afterwards.

Q Did he have a -- do you know if he had a specific title, and any specific duties?

A No, sir. If anything, he appeared to be an advisor.

Q Okay. To whom?

A Just to the mission at Libya.

Q Okay. Are you familiar with FACT training?

A Yes, sir.

Q Can you tell us what that is?

A Yes, sir. I believe FACT stands for Foreign Affairs Counter Threat course. It's another course put on by our Diplomatic Security Training Center. And I believe it to be a prerequisite for -- chief of mission personnel had to complete the course, or were supposed to complete the course prior to deploying to a high-threat post, with the exception of agents within Diplomatic Security, or agents that had completed or were part of mobile security deployment.

Q Okay. And did you have to take or did you take FACT training?

A I took FACT training prior to being a grants officer in Embassy [REDACTED].

Q Okay.

A But since I had the high-threat training course --

Q Sure.

A -- that trumped the FACT training.

Q Okay. Were you given a list of what you should take with you? Was there any -- was there anything that was given while you were in New York prior to coming? Was there -- well --

A I don't specifically recall.

Q Any information as far as like firearms, or clothing?

A You know, in general, I probably would have gotten some guidance, you know, from friends over there, bring this, bring that, you know, don't bring this. But for the most part traveling overseas, [REDACTED].

Q To your knowledge, was there sufficient amount of personal protection equipment in Benghazi when you got there?

A When I went over there, I went over there with my own personal protection equipment so, I had the equipment that I needed.

Q So, can you tell us what would that have consisted of?

A That would have consisted of a protective vest [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]; a ballistic

helmet; some medical kits, individual first aid kits; holsters to carry the weapons; harnesses, a harness that I would wear across my chest that I would have possibly eight M4 mags; two pistol magazines; medical kit; smoke; chem light; stuff like that.

Q So, let me just be clear, so you brought all of that with you, or did you receive that?

A No, thank you for the clarification. I brought the gear to carry that with me. I brought with me flashlights, medical kits, stuff like that, anything that would have to do with weapons and stuff like that, smoke, was there at post.

Q Got it.

A I did bring a fixed knife, switchblade and then a fixed-blade knife with me.

Q What type of firearms or equipment -- what type of firearms did you have to do your job?

A At post I was issued a M4 and a SIG 229R.

Q And let me just let you know that my colleagues may also jump in on different sections and ask questions as well, so I just want to let you know that as well.

A Okay.

Q Are you familiar with a firearm called a M249?

A M249, yes, sir.

Q Can you explain to us what that is?

A That's a -- basically a fully automatic machine gun-type weapon. It fires a 556 round. It's generally also referenced as a SAW, squad automatic weapon.

Q Have you been trained on that weapon?

A I had fired it at high-threat training course.

Mr. Westmoreland. [REDACTED]

Mr. [REDACTED]

Mr. Westmoreland.

Ms. Jackson.

Mr. [REDACTED]

Mr. Westmoreland.

Mr. [REDACTED]

Mr. Westmoreland.

Mr. [REDACTED]

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q So I'm going to ask the Congressman's question a different way. Were there machine guns available in Benghazi to you or other agents?

A I would have to -- we can talk in a classified level for that information.

Q Okay. So, can you explain to us, what was your specific role? You stated that you were ARSO?

A Yes, sir.

Q So, just explain to us what that role entails, and what you did.

A In general, Assistant Regional Security Officer, is there to support the Regional Security Officer in providing safety and security for Chief of Mission personnel overseas. That support can come through managing a variety of security programs that fall under the Regional Security Officer. So, that was, once we got over there, I just took work from the RSO and supported him.

Q Who did you replace, do you know?

A I believe I replaced an individual named [REDACTED].

Q Okay. And who -- can you walk us through the chain of command? I'm just not familiar with -- I know you sort of touched on it, but who was your supervisor and how did the chain of command work going up and possibly going down?

A Going down, there was no going down. I was at the bottom edge in the command. It was -- everybody was above me. I had been a DS agent for about a year-and-a-half at the time, so this was my first time actually doing overseas work so I was fairly new at it. But above me was the Regional Security Officer in Benghazi, and then he reported to the Regional Security Officer in Tripoli.

Q And then do you know who he reported to?

A The Regional Security Officer in Tripoli is going to report to the Deputy Chief of Mission in Tripoli who will then report to the Chief of Mission.

Q Okay. And just so the record is clear, and I know there was some overlap, so you reported to the RSO there in Libya?

A In Benghazi.

Q In Benghazi, I'm sorry.

A Yes, sir.

Q Excuse me. And give me the name of that individual again?

A There were a couple. There was [REDACTED] at first, and then I believe [REDACTED].

Q Okay. And then going up the chain command for the RSO in

Tripoli?

A Yes, sir.

Q To your knowledge who was that?

A To my knowledge it was [REDACTED].

Q Okay. And then you had the DCM, is that correct?

A Deputy Chief of Mission, correct, sir.

Q Correct. Who was that?

A I do not recall.

Q Okay. Prior to your arrival in Benghazi, did you have a chance to talk to your supervisor?

A Prior to my -- excuse me, to clarify, do you mean my supervisor in Benghazi, or my current --

Q Supervisor in Benghazi.

A Prior to the arrival, there might have been an email saying, I'm coming over. Here is my flight information. But I just don't recall.

Q Prior to your arrival in Benghazi, to your knowledge, do you recall receiving informal intelligence prior to being there?

A No, sir, I don't recall. Informal, could you please clarify for me, intelligence?

Q Did you do any research on, okay, Benghazi, what's, you know, what's happening, you know?

A I talked to some colleagues of mine that served there. I was in contact with the desk officer.

Q And who was that?

A That is [REDACTED], Diplomatic Security Desk Officer, but that was about all of the research.

Q And to your knowledge, I mean, if you recall, what if anything did they communicate to you about the situation in Benghazi?

A At the time when I volunteered for the TDY, probably March or April, it was a pretty relaxed environment over there. It was a good TDY. It was a chance, you know, as a junior agent to get up on the front lines, and you know, and try and do some good work.

Q Okay. All right. So, we talked about informal.

A Yes, sir.

Q Okay. So, prior to going to Benghazi, were you given any intelligence reports or briefing papers regarding the security situation in Benghazi?

A No, sir. There were informal emails coming over from the RSO.

Q Sure.

A You know, I believe before I arrived there was a security incident at the Red Cross so I got an email saying, hey, this happened, but that would have been the extent of it.

Q Good. And we will talk a little bit later about the security incidents.

A Okay.

Q Fair enough. Once in Benghazi did you have access to intelligence reports?

A I had access to classified reporting up to the secret level.

Q And did you read them?

A Yes, sir.

Q And to your knowledge, were the reports daily, or weekly, or bimonthly?

A A lot of the reports we would get would be "you should reads" from our headquarters. Basically our headquarters element that has access to information up to the SCI level, was tracking all of the intelligence, would flag this for the RSO. And so we would see that, and/or they would either get us a secret tear line, or they would give us a cable number to go -- have our principal officer, more senior personnel pull that information from other people.

Q Can you tell us what is a SITREP?

A SITREP, situation report. I mean, if --

Q Well, what is it?

A I mean, it's, you know, just a quick event of what is going on, I mean, a quick snapshot of what happened, here is the situation on the ground.

Q And how is it prepared?

A Generally, I mean, DS, we don't use SITREPs. We don't prepare SITREPs. We have other mechanisms that we report through.

Q Okay.

A So, as far as how a SITREP is prepared --

Q Were you ever responsible for preparing SITREPs, or --

A Not that I recall. I mean, information I would have received, I probably passed on to the RSO --



Q     Okay.

A     -- and the principal officer and maybe they would send back an email, but for us, within State, SITREP is not really a formal product. It is more of just, hey, here is an email of the situation on the ground. Here is what we know.

Q     And you stated that there are other ways that you communicated in DS. So, if it wasn't -- if you didn't use SITREPs, what was the other way that you would normally communicate?

A     Diplomatic Security uses a system called Spot Reports, and generally it's used for if there is an event going on somewhere in the world, it is an internal VF document of what the RSO's impressions are, and knowledge of the event at the time with the facts known at the time and if that information is sent back to DS headquarters to keep them aware of things.

Q     And did you prepare Spot Reports?

A     No, sir. I don't believe so.

Q     So --

A     To the best of my recollection. I don't recall.

Q     No, no. I understand. And I'm totally new to this whole process, so I'm just trying to figure out, if a situation occurred, and you wanted to communicate up through the chain, how would you normally communicate that?

A     I would relay the information to our Regional Security Officer, my immediate supervisor.

Q     Verbally or would you do it -- how would you?

A In Benghazi a lot of it was verbally. We sat right next to each other. I would go out and I would see an event while I was driving out. I would come back and I would just, you know, hey, boss, here is what I saw. Here is what happened.

Q Okay. With respect to your duties, were you and the other agents in charge of security at the compound?

A I mean, we are responsible for the overall safety and security, DS is.

Q Was it part of your job to provide security for the PO and the IMO if they were outside of the compound?

A Yes, sir.

Q Did you have responsibility for anyone else's coming and goings off the compound?

A As Diplomatic Security, we controlled who accessed the compound, so we controlled it that way. But other than that, you know, our main priority was the chief of mission personnel.

Q So, can you describe for us how you and other agents undertake a movement, you know, with the PO or the IMO. How would that process come about?

A My understanding while we were in Benghazi, I don't recall a specific time, but the best I can remember most of my movements were to venues we already knew, and going to meet with people he had met with in the past. And so in planning those movements, the Principal Officer would say, hey, he wants to have a meeting here. We would make sure we had a driver and at that point it would be a driver, a DS agent

riding in the front seat, passenger, and then the principal officer in the backseat.

Q And was there a requirement that one agent remain back at the compound, or --

A That was our practice. I can't say that that was a requirement policy that I saw, but that was our practice.

Q Who guarded the compound, to your knowledge?

A Could you be a little more specific? Like internally, external security?

Q Well, let's internal, you know, sort of the range of security. So, maybe you can walk me through.

A Okay.

Q With respect to security, why don't you talk to me or talk to us about some of the layers of security?

A Okay, we had a local Guard Force group there, put out by Blue Mountain, a local Guard Force. They were unarmed, and they were one of the elements. They were at each of the entrances, plus I believe we also had a rover and they work 24/7.

Q Can you explain what a rover is?

A That is somebody who is -- most of the local guards there, we always had somebody at the main gate. We had -- and there were three gates total, so we always had somebody at each gate. And then somebody roving and then I believe a guard force supervisor, but I'm starting to get a little fuzzy on the details on that one, but that's what a rover would do, just walk around. And they were there, they would

screen visitors, and they were also there to notify us. They would hit the alarm if something happened.

Q Okay. Can you explain what the alarm, what does that mean?

A Yes, sir. At a lot of our posts throughout the world we have, State Department has a system that's called the Imminent Danger Notification System. It is IDNS. And this system, it's more commonly referred to as the duck and cover because when the alarm goes off, a voice starts saying duck and cover. Get away from the windows. Duck. And it plays in perpetuity. So, it is called the duck-and-cover alarm that's what we call it. It is activated by a pendant that somebody on the local Guard Force has on them. And to activate it, they have to hold down two buttons at the same time. And once they hold down those two buttons, the alarm starts going off throughout the compound. So that's what the --

Q And who would have had that pendant?

A That pendant would have generally been on one of the guards at the primary entrance. I believe it was -- was that Charlie gate? I'm -- I don't -- the traditional primary entrance, wherever that one was. And, one of the other guards would have had the other pendant. I don't recall who. There were some technical issues with the pendants, but so --

Q I will come back to the technical issues. So, just so that I'm clear, you said the Blue Mountain Group were the ones at the gates?

A Yes, sir.

Q So would it -- BMG, would they be the ones with the pendant

or was there someone else?

A No, sir. It's the Blue Mountain Group local Guard Force that had the pendants on them.

Q Okay. All right, can you explain to us just what were some of the technical issues with the pendant, was it working, not working?

A Battery dying, or the thing breaking. You know, these are things that hang from the neck that guards are handing off to one another so they get a lot of wear and tear. So --

Q How did you know that there were issues with the pendant? I mean, was there a situation that you recall?

A Not that I can specifically remember, you know. I just remember there being some issues with the pendants. What those specific issues were, it is 2.5 years ago.

Q Okay. Who are the QRF?

A QRF were members from the February 17th Martyrs Brigade, the militia, and the QRF was our Quick Reaction Force. These were four individuals that lived in a house on the compound that were all armed.

Mr. Westmoreland. Can I?

Mr. Grider. Yeah, please, go ahead.

Mr. Westmoreland. So they lived on the mission there?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir. As you came into the main mission, there was a house immediately off to the right. And that's where -- that's where they were there, and we made sure that we always had a 24/7, we had somebody from -- one of them were always there on the compound.

Mr. Westmoreland. And they were armed?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir. Most of them had AK-47s, and some other -- other type weapons.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q The Congressman asked a very good question. I guess, what was your relationship with, you know, to your knowledge, what was your sort of -- this is where we can ask feelings -- how did you feel with them?

A It was a professional, friendly relationship. You know, they all knew -- they appeared to know the area very well. You know, they would help us translate stuff, or, you know, and they were all associated with the militia. So, you know, there was the backing and support of the militia. And we interacted with them on a daily basis. Sometimes we played soccer with them, you know.

Mr. Westmoreland. How many were typically there?

Mr. [REDACTED]. There was a contingent of four. Typically, sir, during the day, three. You know, if there were no movements and everyone was there, then three to four. All of them were there. Sometimes if they had a family issue come up and they had to go somewhere, they would notify us, but three or four for the most part, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did they have any -- three or four of them there, I mean, a Quick Reaction Force, that's not quite -- I mean, that is not a number I would call a force, but I mean, it is better than none. Did they have the ability to communicate with some of their leaders, commanders, or whatever, to be able to call in reinforcements

if there was --

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir. They had multiple police radios on them that they would use, and they could also listen, monitor police traffic in the area, what other police in the area were responding to.

Mr. Westmoreland. So they would have had contact with the -- typically, the officers that may have been in the car, set out front, or something like that? They would have had the ability to communicate with them?

Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't know who specifically they had contact with, sir. The Supreme Security Council was responsible for security, and things weren't neatly organized there. So, they had access to police sources and police radios.

Mr. Westmoreland. But they were under somebody else's command as far as --

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir, back at the militia. Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah, and they had the ability to communicate with them. Say, hey, we are under attack, or whatever?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay, thank you.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q In following up to that, was there another contingent of militia members that were available? I mean, did they have like a base where there were always, you know, 40, 50, 60, people available that if they called for reinforcements you had another contingent that was available to respond?

A There was a February 17th militia base close by. I do not know their numbers or their personnel. I never went and visited it. In theory, that was the plan.

Q Okay. Yeah. You said that they had AK-47s and other type weapons. What other type weapons did they have?

A Some really old, you know, or other types of machine guns or other higher caliber weapons, that I just had never seen before. Generally Russians, or Eastern Bloc-type weapons that just really aren't out there on the market anymore, so --

Q And did they keep them at that house where they resided?

A Yes, ma'am, they had additional firepower there.

Q Okay. Did they keep any of those weapons strategically around the compound?

A No, ma'am. While I was there, I can -- while I was there, their weapons were inside their house.

Q Okay. So would it be safe to say that you didn't assume that those weapons were available to you and the other agents; that they would be exclusively used by the Feb 17th Brigade members?

A While I was there my understanding was that if anything were to occur, they would be using those weapons.

Q Okay.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did they use those weapons?

Mr. [REDACTED]. While I was there, sir, we never had, other than a couple of the incidents that we will get into here in a bit, there was never the need for them while I was there.



BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And of the four people that were there, I mean, did they ever get a day off or were they just pretty much there continuous while you were there?

A No, ma'am. They had -- they had days off. They could, you know, go into the city they had stuff they needed to do. We would tell them our schedule -- you know, we would let them know if we needed them, you know, and work it around that way.

Q Okay. So would you say that you, that maybe -- did you have like a base of six or seven people so that you always had three or four at any given time, or was it just the four, and maybe one would be out?

A No, ma'am. It was just the four.

Q Okay.

A And then if one was out and about, or just one of them had to go to family business or something like that, then they would -- and they were free to do that.

Ms. Jackson. Okay.

Mr. Grider. We are at the 15-minute mark. I think I'm going to try to cover one more section, and then I may yield back my time. Or how are you all doing?

Ms. Robinson. I think you have 25 minutes.

Ms. Jackson. You have 25.

Mr. Grider. Oh. But I mean, Mr. [REDACTED], do you need a break?

Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm good.

Mr. Grider. All right. Good. Thanks for the math.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q All right, physical layout. So I think we are sort of talking about -- can you just walk us through? I don't think anybody has probably been there, so can you give us sort of what is -- describe the layout of the compound, you know, size, and then where places were located?

A The compound we had was generally, it was two villas that the State Department was renting. There was a wall dividing those two villas. It was Villa B, and Villa C, I believe. Again, 2.5 years ago so I could be wrong on that.

Q Sure.

A And Villa C was where you had your traditional entrance, you know, the one that we would use to come and go.

Q Sure.

A And so as you -- in Villa C, you had a house where the information management officer the principal officer and an RSO, myself, at the time slept. You also had a separate house where the February 17th militia members, four of them would stay. The rest of it was open field. Looks like the prior owner maybe was growing something there. I'm not sure. But --

And so that was the villa, rectangular shaped. You could come in the traditional entrance and you could keep going straight out the back. There was a street, a driveway that cut in half. And you could go straight out the back. Next to that you had Villa B.

In Villa B was the, what we traditionally called the cantina,

food. There was a medical room as well as housing for additional personnel, some sofas on there, TV, stuff like that. And we would eat all of our meals there. And then right across from Villa B, you had the TOC, which is the office space. In there you had the principal officer's office. You had another bedroom for a DS agent. You had our TOC. You had the Information Management Office. I believe that was all that was in there.

Q You may have stated this. Did you all reside in one villa when you were there?

A I resided in the house on Villa C.

Q Okay.

A Generally, we had one person staying in the TOC. We had one person, guests, whoever, would stay in the cantina, and then there was two of us, two DS agents over in the -- with the principal officer and the information management officer.

Q Did you keep vehicles close to the villa that you resided in, in the evening hours?

A Yes, sir. Every day at the end of the day, we would get one of the vehicles and we would back it up to an entrance. There was an emergency escape right off my window, and we would back up the vehicle to that entrance right there.

Q Okay. Are you familiar with REACT procedures or plans?

A Yes, sir.

Q Can you tell us what those are?

A REACT procedures or plans vary greatly depending on the

environment where you are at. REACT is, you know, I went to training, learned about fire, medical, security react, and it is basically the plan of what you are going to do if there is a medical event, if there is a fire event, if there is a security event, so on and so forth. And so they are called REACT plans.

Q Did you all have REACT plans? Do you recall?

A I don't recall seeing one. You know, I mean, I know in the event of a medical emergency we are going to hospital. Security event, we are going to fight back. But I can't say they weren't there, but again, it was 2.5 years ago, so --

Q Just -- you said, I know in the event, you know, that if you are hurt you go to the hospital?

A Right.

Q And in the event, you know, I'm not sure if I understood -- in the event you are under attack, you are going to do what?

A Fight back.

Q So, how did you know that? How did you know?

A While I was there, and this will get into one of the security incidents there. There was an IED on the wall. The plan among the three of us at the time was, while I was there, in the event of a security incident, one individual stays at the TOC, he monitors comm and videos. Another individual, the senior RSO at the time stays locked up in the safe haven with the principal officer and the information management officer. My job was to put my kit on and find out what's going on,

and that was our part of our plan.

Q And that was -- was that a written plan or was that more -- was that a written plan?

A That was the plan that was made known to me.

Q Okay.

A I can't say it wasn't a written plan, but that is just what was made known to me.

Q And who communicated that plan to you?

A That I don't recall.

Mr. Grider. Go ahead.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did you ever practice that plan or run a drill?

Mr. [REDACTED]. We did drills with the local Guard Force on if there is a bomb versus if there is an attack, what are you going to do? How are you all going to react?

Mr. Westmoreland. So, they actually, the Blue Mountain --

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did 17th Brigade participate in those?

Mr. [REDACTED]. I believe so, sir. I believe so.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay, so while you were there, they did have a drill?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir, I remember running the drills with the guards letting them know. If it is a bomb, you need to call off a bomb. If it is an attack, you need to call off an attack.

Mr. Westmoreland. Was this something that was planned or the principal officer or something go down and push the two buttons and

do the duck and cover and have you all do that?

Mr. [REDACTED]. No, sir, there were planned drills. I was told by other personnel there, that these drills were taking place before I arrived so they could train the guards on, hey, this is what you are going to do.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did you notice what the 17th Brigade -- did you notice what they did during a drill?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir. I don't specifically -- again, it is 2.5 years ago, I do remember them having a role in the drill and then being a part of the drill. But you know, beyond that, I can't say more specifically, sir. I'm sorry.

Mr. Westmoreland. Thank you.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q So moving to a different topic, are there physical security requirements for overseas posts in the State Department?

A Sir, I would imagine there are. But --

Q Hey, I'm asking you the question. If I knew the answer, I wouldn't be asking.

A Yes, sir. I believe there are. It has never been in my lane whatsoever, my responsibility to get involved in them.

Q Okay. So, I guess that is my next question. Are you familiar with physical security requirements?

A No, sir.

Q Just in general?

A No, sir, I am not familiar with any formal, I mean,

requirements on stuff. I know they exist and I know they are out there, but --

Q So, would you have an opinion on -- do you believe the Benghazi compound met the physical security requirements if there were some? What's your opinion?

A Since I don't know the requirements, I can't really say whether there is.

Q Just generally, safety -- security requirements in general.

A Again, I can't say because those requirements, I don't know if they fall on the mission at the time because a lot of -- there's certain mission facilities that may have an exemption or other, so --

Q Okay. So, did you have any role in deciding whether the physical security in Benghazi needed to be upgraded or downgraded? Did you have a role in that type of discussion or analysis?

A We would discuss different things we could do to beef up security at the consulate or at the mission.

Q So, can you tell us what were some of the things that were discussed?

A The thing that I remember discussing is sandbags. That's what I remember requesting.

Q So, tell us what is the significance of sandbags?

A Yes, sir, we had sandbags throughout our compound. Some of them were fighting position, some of them were used for cover as the compound itself was spread out over a good distance. Some of the sandbags were set up to where you could move, but you didn't have to

cover a large distance outside of cover so you could essentially bound from place to place. So we used them for that.

Just outside of my room there was a window. You go out there and there were sandbags on the ledge, and then there was a little fighting position right down there on the corner of the house. And so that's what we used the sandbags for.

Q And so based on your prior statement, was there a need for more sandbags, or did you have sufficient sandbags?

A The sandbags at the time while I was there, the sandbags we had seemed to be falling apart a little bit.

Q Okay.

A So we had the sand. We just needed to replace some of the sandbags.

Mr. Westmoreland. One little quick thing. You say fighting positions?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. So that would have been your position?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Because everybody else --

Mr. [REDACTED]. I'm the one fighting. That's right.

Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah, yeah. So, that was your spot?

Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Anything else? Anything else? I mean you worked in, is it [REDACTED]?



A Erbil.

Q Erbil. So, just from your general role, I mean, and just security, from a security perspective, anything else that crossed your mind? So, we had sandbags. Anything else that you may have talked about of, boy, this is great, or, boy, we could use more?

A I think we also worked on getting additional lighting. In the evening the compound was dark. I think we also worked with -- there's some concrete barriers outside. We might have reorganized some of those to prevent vehicles from ramming a gate, or at least delaying a vehicle from taking such action. Sandbags, lights, I believe there was an upgrade request put in prior to my arrival that they were working on, but again, that was prior to my --

Q Upgrade on what, I guess?

A Again, to the best of my knowledge from 2.5 years ago, I believe there was like maybe some additional fence on the inside, something along those lines. But, again, that request was put forward by a prior DS personnel.

Q And, these three to four items that, you know, you may have discussed or reflected upon, how would you have communicated that up? If you saw a sandbag leaking, how would you -- would you have just jotted it down? How would you have communicated that? I think we need a new sandbag. How would that have --

A From there, I mean, any concerns I have I relayed it up my chain of command, so I relayed that to the RSO. Specifically with the sandbags, it -- I believe, it was about \$900 and so anything over

\$500 -- I believe there is a limit; \$300, \$500, you can come out of petty cash right there. You know, we had -- but other than that, I had to get approval and so that request would have gone back to the RSO in Tripoli.

Q And do you know if that request actually made it back to the RSO in Tripoli, or --

A I believe so.

Q Okay. Is that based on just conversation that you had?

A Email chain back and forth. I know the conversation had taken place. I do not know if the conversation -- the request was made, and then I was received -- I was forwarded an email from prior to my arrival, they were discussing sandbags.

Q Okay.

A And so I can't say if I sent the email, or if I brought the request up for sandbags, and someone said, hey, this conversation has already happened. Here is where it went.

Q Are you familiar with Jersey barriers?

A Yes, sir, I am.

Q And what is your knowledge of a Jersey barrier in relation to Benghazi?

A Jersey barriers, as I understand, is just a little concrete pylons, pillars, you know, that you put out there, and slow vehicles down as they enter, or concrete pillars that you set out that can, again, slow vehicles.

Q Based on your opinion were there sufficient Jersey barriers

there?

A There is -- I mean, I would say, you know, any DS agent in the world would always take more resources. You know, I mean, any security person in the world would take more resources. But, I mean, there seemed to be plenty of concrete, plenty of concrete there, sir.

Q Were there any upgrades implemented during your time there in Benghazi?

A I believe it was additional lighting.

Q And where was that lighting?

A Lighting was, I believe, spread out mostly on Villa C. But there might have been some lights put over in Villa B. I can't say specifically.

Q Were you aware of any conversations back at DS headquarters with main State that there may have been an issue over funding with respect to security upgrades?

A Again, I had heard conversations of funding, but nothing that I can, you know --

Q So, you were aware that there may have been conversations with respect to funding?

A Yeah, I was aware that the issues had been -- had been risen at higher levels.

Q Okay. Did you ever talk to [REDACTED] about security upgrades or funding?

A Yes, sir. So, that was the only conversation. There was a conversation that I had with [REDACTED].

Q Can you tell us about that?

A Yes, sir. We used PTLs, called personnel tracking locator devices. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]. We use the term PTL -- 7 of 11 of our PTLs were down, so I was working to get them replaced. These were unclassified items, but at the time the policy was to bring them back, to travel with them overseas, via class pouch, classified pouch. That was the policy. Classified pouch, there are certain procedures and regulations that have to be followed when traveling overseas with a classified pouch. We did not necessarily have those procedures. I'm sorry, to my understanding at the time, a classified pouch in Benghazi could have prevented some -- could have caused some difficulties for us. I did not have knowledge of the procedures. I was just told that it could be difficult for us.

So, the suggestion was to bring them over to Tripoli. We were going to have [REDACTED] fly over, fly into Tripoli. From there, they go through the policies there. The Embassy had that set up. And then he gets on a plane and flies to Benghazi. But, we are told that for [REDACTED] to fly from Tripoli to Benghazi, that would cost an additional \$100, and they did not want to spend that money. So, that was my sole, sole funding piece.

Q I appreciate that.

Ms. Jackson. And you said it was an additional \$100?

Mr. [REDACTED] Ballpark. The conversation was, the conversation was, [REDACTED], you guys are closing in December. And if I fly them into

Tripoli, then I have to spend \$100 to fly them to Benghazi. You want your PTLs? Find a way to work it out in Benghazi. So --

Mr. Grider. Now, I think I'm at sort of the 10-minute mark.

Mr. [REDACTED] All right.

Mr. Grider. Unless my math is off. All right, so we will do just probably about five or six more questions and then we will yield.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Do you know if there are budget security decisions being made at Main State? And I'm repeating some of these questions, but you can go, yes, no.

A I do not have any knowledge. I know our office submits a budget once a year and that goes somewhere.

Q Do you know if the lack of funding impacted your receiving any physical security upgrades?

A I have no knowledge of that.

Q We will talk a little bit in more specifics, but what was the condition of the perimeter walls when you arrived?

A Cinder blocks with concrete poured in them, some steel rebar, maybe 10- to 12-feet high, best guess.

Q Okay. Do you know how many agents were slotted originally for Benghazi?

A No, sir, I don't have that knowledge. I don't have any knowledge of that.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Was there ever more than three of you in Benghazi at any

given time?

A I believe so. I believe we got a TDYer from Tripoli, a [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. But I don't know if he came over to bump it up to four or five, or if he came over to fill a staffing gap.

Q Did it ever go below three while you were there?

A No, ma'am, not to my knowledge. I don't recall that.

Q Okay.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did you ever see any Marines there, or hear of any Marines ever being there?

Mr. [REDACTED] No, sir. We had somebody from the Defense Attache's Office, [REDACTED] came over for a couple -- for about -- he ended up staying about a week-and-a-half, maybe 2 weeks, but that was all. That is the only DOD presence I was aware of.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And what was he doing in Benghazi when you got there?

A I believe the U.S. military had procured and donated some uniforms to the Libyan military, and we were going to be giving it to the military out in Benghazi, and he was there forward duty, the ceremonial handover.

Q Can I go back to the [REDACTED], the personal tracking devices for a minute, just to make sure that I have it clear in my mind? Your plan to get them was to have them flown into Tripoli in a classified pouch?

A Correct.

Q Was [REDACTED] coming in at that time?

A Yes. A little background. Traditionally, State Department uses diplomatic couriers to send their pouches classified -- classified pouches throughout the world. There are certain circumstances when you can have somebody get, it is called the non-pro courier designation. In other words, you are not a professional courier. But you have the paperwork and the authorization from the State Department to travel as a courier on this specific mission.

So, it was to get [REDACTED] set up as a non-pro courier, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and he flys out to Benghazi.

Q Okay. And he was on his way to Benghazi for a TDY also?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. But that was rejected, that plan was rejected?

A I believe so, yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. So did you ever get the replacement personal tracking devices?

A Yes. Well, [REDACTED] did not arrive until after I departed.

Q Okay.

A So, from my understanding from conversations with other people, the PTL devices were in country.

Q In country before you left or after you left?

A After I left.

Q Okay.

A After I left.

Q And by in country, do you mean in Benghazi, or in Tripoli, or in Libya somewhere?

A In Benghazi, ma'am.

Q Okay. So, you believe they arrived after you left?

A I believe so, ma'am.

Q Okay.

Mr. Westmoreland. When you say classified pouch, is that one of those little bags that has got a lock on it, and --

Mr. [REDACTED] Generally a classified pouch will -- no, sir, that's one of the documents we use to carry classified documents within -- generally, within an area like within a city or something like that. There is policies for that. These are items that are [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] under the watch of somebody as they travel en route.

Mr. Westmoreland. But you said that it might be difficult to bring them, or might cause some problems or something to try to bring those into Benghazi?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir. Generally, with -- first, let me say, I have never traveled as a non-pro courier, and I have never escorted a classified pouch. My understanding is, though, there is a bunch of agreements between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and or the host country and the country bringing in the classified pouch. And so -- and there's certain procedures that have to be followed; notification.



Again, we are getting into something I assume, but it was just made clear to me that those procedures aren't in place in Benghazi; or they are in place, what was told to us was, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Mr. Westmoreland. But the foreign minister would typically have authority over the country, you would assume?

Mr. [REDACTED] Sir, I mean, earlier on with the chain of command, there were a bunch of people above me, sir, and I was -- I was --

Mr. Westmoreland. I got you.

Mr. [REDACTED] I was following orders at the time, sir.

Mr. Grider. Sharon, do you have any other questions just on that section?

Ms. Jackson. Not on that section.

Mr. Grider. Okay. Or just generally. I can yield. We have got five more minutes instead of going into another --

Ms. Jackson. You know what, let me just ask a couple of followup questions.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Agent [REDACTED], you were asked earlier if you had any informal conversations or read any briefing papers prior to going over to Benghazi. Did you either right before going over, or immediately upon arrival, did you ever review anything known as turnover documents, such

as a security of environment and threat assessment, or sort of a summary of what the RSO prior to [REDACTED] might have had?

Do you recall any of those type of documents?

A I remember when I arrived there were a bunch of documents that I was reading on the -- that were given to me to read regarding operations, policies, and procedures. So, I do remember arriving and reading documents about how things were run in Benghazi. Recollection of those documents that is a separate.

Q Sure. Was there a section in there that talked about the overall security environment in and around Benghazi, such as a section maybe on the various militias that were there, the stability of the government? Do you recall reading anything like that?

A No, ma'am, I don't recall.

Q Okay. Do you not recall at all, or do you recall that they -- that part wasn't a part of it?

A Most of the information that I learned about the militias came from conversations with RSO, Principal Officer, and other people that were there before me just getting their feeling for atmospheres and things on the ground. I did read a bunch of documents when I did arrive; a lot of stuff. But --

Q Okay. It might have been the REACT plan, or things like that, or, you know, who was the local Guard Force, that kind of stuff?

A Traditional turnover documents. But beyond that, the content of them --

Q When you started talking with people once you arrived in

Benghazi, what was your -- what was their sense of the overall security and stability of the area? What did they impart to you?

A You know, just that it's -- I think the biggest takeaway I had was that you know, things were in flux, you know. There was a lot of change, a lot of activity, you know.

Q You were also asked earlier about various roles and responsibilities, and you, in particular, talked about the REACT plans where somebody would go to the TOC and monitor the cameras and the phones and things like that, and someone would be -- get the principal officer, and the IMO to the safe haven. And then you have got to deal with whatever imminent disaster was looming. In your day-to-day activities on the compound or making movements, did you have similar roles and responsibilities, like, was one of you designated as the person --

A Okay.

Q -- who went out with movements with the principal officers? Was there one of you who was the TOC officer? You know, did you rotate those, or you know, just basically on a daily basis, were there roles and responsibilities?

A On a daily basis there were roles and responsibilities, but it wasn't as much as related to moving with the principal officer on protection. That was more just who was available and who is up, who is ready. My responsibilities were I worked a lot with local Guard Force, and then I worked with our vehicle fleet, not fleet, but you know, five vehicles, making sure they were ready, properly outfitted, you know, ready to do whatever we needed them to do. As well as local

guard -- yeah, local Guard Force was equal, the two things that -- other persons, other individuals on the compound had other portfolios that they worked with, but those were the two.

Q That you did?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And so when you say that you worked with the local Guard Force was that, you know, your observing them to make sure that they are stopping vehicles, or they are talking to people before they enter the compound?

A Making sure that they were following some basic security practices; making sure that, yeah, following access control procedures, training them if there was an incident, or a bomb, or something that they were going to react correctly. There were personnel issues, you know, stuff like that.

Q Okay. I have one more followup question from the first hour, and then basically our time is virtually up.

You talked about the principal officer, and the IMO and the three DS agents that were there, and we mentioned an individual that you described as an advisor, [REDACTED]. Were there other locally employed staff that would come on compound on a regular, if not daily basis?

A Yes, ma'am. We had two drivers while I was there, and then there was a female employee.

Q Support-staff-type person?

A Support staff, you know, would set up meetings, help out.

Just, you know, knew the area, knew the town.

Q A Libyan national?

A Yes, ma'am, all Libyan.

Q And the drivers were Libyan?

A The drivers were Libyan nationals as well.

Q How was their driving ability?

A Their driving ability, I had no issues or complaints. It was Libya. The traffic over there is pretty crazy.

Q So, they were pretty fearless?

A They were good.

Q Okay, that's all the followup questions I had from the first session. Congressman, anything?

Mr. Westmoreland. I'm good.

Mr. Grider. We will go off the record.

[Recess.]

Ms. Robinson. All right. Let's go back on the record.

EXAMINATION

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q Mr. [REDACTED], thank you for being here today, and on behalf of myself and my colleagues, thank you also for your service to our country.

I am joined here by Heather Sawyer and Ron Desai and Brent Woolfork, and they might be jumping in with questions as I go along.

Before I get into the security incidents which came up, was mentioned briefly in the last round, I wanted to cover just a couple topics, other topics that had come up, one of which was you mentioned that you volunteered for Benghazi. What made you want to volunteer to go there?

A I was a new agent, new to DS. You know, my friends over there, they were enjoying the work, you know, as being junior agents it was a chance for us to go out on the front lines, you know, and get some exposure to some work, you know, where you get to work fairly independently, you know. So yeah that --

Q So, which of the colleagues had you been in touch with prior to going, that had said it was a good experience?

A [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and there were a couple other

agents from the [REDACTED] field office that had participated in Benghazi TDYs, but I don't recall their names.

Q Thank you. So, you mentioned that before you went to Benghazi, you had heard about the ICRC attack, and you might have been in the loop about some of the things that might have been going on just from news reports or whatnot. Was there any doubt in your mind that Benghazi could be a dangerous place before you went there?

A You know, I mean I think the fact that we were required to have high-threat training, have the high-threat training certified before going there, volunteering, you know, it was in an area that was just recovering from civil war. I mean, there's always the threat or possibility of danger.

Q What kind of scenarios did they train you on in the high-threat course?

A High-threat course when I went through it, mostly focused on we got one week of medical training, basically trauma, combat medicine, one week of additional firearms training above and beyond what we already received as agents. That was mostly working with our M-4s and M-249s and M-240s. And then we got three weeks of additional driving training, land navigation, conducting motorcades in high-threat environments, as comparison to conducting a motorcade in D.C., differences, stuff like that.

Q Okay. We talked in the last round about the reporting process and that you reported to [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED]

Q Oliveira. But that at one occasion regarding [REDACTED] you spoke with [REDACTED] in D.C.?

A Yes.

Q Were there any other instances where you worked directly with somebody in D.C. regarding any security-related issues?

A To my knowledge the PTLs were the -- and even then my supervisor in Benghazi knew I was working to get the PTLs fixed.

Q Was that an unusual scenario where you had to go outside of the reporting process where you spoke with a RSO. Then the RSO spoke with the RSO in Tripoli, that reporting process or --

A Generally, you know, PTLs were a standard part of our operations, and so we have a point of contact back in DS headquarters, a desk officer. And that desk officer is there who kind of oversees all the security -- not oversees, but he provides administrative and logistical and, you know, coordinates financial support for the RSOs and so like a lot of gear that we have overseas, if something breaks, we have to get it replaced. So, while the RSO in Tripoli may have had visibility on it or not, it wasn't necessarily his lane to work on getting the PTLs in Benghazi fixed. That was more our responsibility. So --

Q Okay. Did you ever work directly with anyone in Tripoli regarding any security-related issues?

A Not that I recall. I mean, there might have been some emails back and forth. I might have been cc'd on some stuff, but, for the most part it went to my chain of command.



Q Okay. Now moving on to the security incidents which we have mentioned, in the last round we talked about the June 6 IED attack. Would you mind just walking us through what happened that night?

A Yes. Around 3:00 in the morning, give or take 20, 30 minutes, the imminent danger and notification system alarm went off, affectionately called the duck-and-cover alarm. That woke all of us up. I got up. I put on my armor, grabbed my weapon, got dressed of course, and then went outside to find out what was going on. I go outside, and I see a bunch of our -- I see our local Guard Force members around the front of the gate making, gesturing with their hands, you know, towards their nose. I did not speak Arabic. At the time they did not speak English, so, that's how we communicated. I believe at the time during that shift there was one person that didn't speak English. So, you know, I started smelling; then I had this distinct smell, not like something burning, but some kind of chemical burn, whatever. Come to find out, you know, 5 minutes later that it's a fuse. But at that point so I asked everyone to start backing away from the wall. Then as I back away, that's when the bomb detonates.

From there it knocked me down. Ears were ringing. I get up with the local guards. We run back. There are some sandbags right there at the corner. Get behind those sandbags, point my M-4 at the hole in the wall and wait for any follow-up attack that may occur. And that was the --

And no follow-up attack did occur, so after that the February 17th Martyrs Brigade showed up in a matter of minutes. Then from there we

set up a perimeter outside on the street. As we had this large hole in our wall, we wanted to push our security perimeter back even further. We set up the large hole -- I mean set up the perimeter, sorry; and then from there, once that perimeter was set up, I went with one of our QRF guys -- I believe his name was [REDACTED]. And we went there and secured the rest of the compound.

As there was a security incident at the front of our compound, we had lost attention and lost visibility on other aspects of our compound. So, before we decided to let the principal officer out of the safe haven and call the all clear, we went through, me with my M4, him with his AK-47, and we just moved through the compound making sure nobody else had entered and there were no other devices. After that was done, we called the all clear.

Q And how quickly were any repairs made to the wall?

A The wall was fixed the same day.

Q And were there any other fixes that had to be made as a result of the attack?

A There was a camera -- I don't know how many in front -- that went out. We had to get that replaced.

Q And how quickly was that replaced?

A I don't recall, but fairly quick. Not the same day. They had to bring an individual from Cairo over with the equipment. One of our security engineering officers in the CV, and they repaired the camera.

Q How receptive was -- I don't know if you worked with

Tripoli. It might not have been you specifically. It might have been your boss, [REDACTED], to get these repairs made?

A Everybody, I mean the second we notified other people that, you know, a bomb had gone off, everybody in defined security headquarters, everybody in Tripoli, Main State was there to help us. What do you guys need.

Q Do you feel like there was anything that you needed or requested at that time that you weren't able to receive?

A Can you specify "at that time"?

Q Right after the attack where you were making requests or --

A No.

Q You mentioned how the local Guard Force responded, the QRF responded, to the 17th Brigade. It didn't sound like you had any specific criticisms for how they responded. Did you feel like they could have done a better job when they responded to the --

A The Blue Mountain Guard followed the training and the drills we had actually been practicing the prior days. The Blue Mountain Guard Force, our local Guard Force in the Consulate or the mission, was unarmed, and they were not there to be a fighting force. Their job, if they were to see or notice anything, was to hit the alarm and call it out, whether it's bomb, bomb, bomb, over the radio or attack, attack, attack, and that's what they did. They did what we as Diplomatic Security asked them to do. The quick response force, they were there investigating the incident, and then within minutes after the bomb detonating, the members of the February 17th militia were

there. So --

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So can I ask you a quick question. Did they actually -- you said you had trained them to either kind of shout out attack, attack, attack, bomb, bomb, bomb. Did they give you that alert in this particular instance?

A I believe so, but, again, to an accuracy, I'm a little fuzzy on that. I mean, I remember afterwards being impressed that, hey, they did what we asked them to do. I remember -- you know, making comments alluding to that.

Q And you told us what you did briefly when you heard the duck and cover.

A Correct.

Q Were you in communication with the other members of your DS team?

A Yes.

Q And if so, how were you in communication with them?

A Well, first just some additional context. The fuse on the bomb was maybe we estimated a 5- to 7-minute fuse, so it was a long fuse. So the duck-and-cover alarms went on for a while. I get up. The alarm is off. My colleague, [REDACTED], he's awake in the TOC; and I remember I called out to him and said, hey, it's a funny smell up here. You know, trying to find out what's going on. And then, we had a radio, and that's how we were talking. And then after the bomb went off, you know, I got on the radio. I called out bomb, bomb,

bomb. You know, it wasn't a mystery to anybody that it was a bomb, but I felt like I needed to call it out anyways. And then from there just radio coms, and my radio, we all the radio network, we were talking.

Q And were you also, you said that [REDACTED] was in the TOC. Did you know where the other, I guess it would have been the RSO?

A [REDACTED], the procedures were at the time in the event like that, the senior RSO stays locked up in the safe haven with the principal officer and the information management officer. So, as I went out to investigate, they locked the safe haven gate behind me, and they stayed there in the safe haven, and then they stayed there in the safe haven until myself or [REDACTED] gave the all clear, at which that point they were able to unlock it and come out.

Q And you had indicated that the QRF was also investigating. When you were talking about the QRF there, were you talking about the internal --

A During the attack -- apologies, to clarify -- I wouldn't say they were investigating. They responded. They were out there trying to find out what was going on. They spoke English and Arabic, and so they were talking to the local guards in Arabic asking them various questions. Do you know what's going on? Stuff like that.

Q And that group, was that the QRF that lived on compound at the mission?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And you said that in addition to the internal QRF, that

within minutes the February 17th Brigade had responded. Approximately how long did it take them to get there?

A I can say that they arrived at the scene within 2 to 3 minutes of the bomb detonating.

Q And do you know how they were notified, who was responsible for notifying them?

A I don't have specific knowledge of that.

Q And approximately how many of the February 17th Brigade responded within that 2- to 3-minute timeframe?

A A couple vehicles showed up at first, but I can't give you an honest number just because when they showed up, I saw that security was there, so I instantly just started giving them directions to push out the perimeter, and then I focused on clearing our compound. So, other people could have been showing up in that time, but I had other stuff that I had to follow up on.

Q And when you instructed them, as you put it, to push out the perimeter, explain to us what that means?

A There was a street that ran right in front of the compound. And it was basically a row of houses. And so, you know, we had our secure entrance -- we had our security procedures set up right in front of the entrance. We had a hole blown in our wall, I said, you know, hey, take vehicles and block off the road here and block off the road here. So let's make sure -- we had this large hole in one of our security structures. Let's make sure nobody can get even close to it that has to be here, so push people out.

Q And they were able to follow your instruction and do that effectively?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And so you felt like the front, that access area that had been damaged, was secure enough for you then to help secure the rest of the compound?

A Yes, ma'am. That was my belief at the time.

Q And during that time when you were securing the perimeter and then checking and securing the rest of the compound, what was your understanding as to where the principal officer was?

A The principal officer was in the safe haven, locked in there with the information management officer, and the regional security officer until I gave the all clear.

Q And based on, I think, you know, my colleague had asked, you know, whether you had any complaints. You know, on the contrary, how did you feel as an affirmative matter in terms of how the local Guard Force and the QRF and the February 17th folks had performed?

A In response to the attack, our security procedures went as they were supposed to go.

Q So, breaking it down, you felt like all of the folks within the RSO team did their jobs and did their jobs well?

A Yes, ma'am; yes, ma'am.

Q And then the same of the local Guard Force, the folks that you said were unarmed?

A The local Guard Force was unarmed. They did what we asked

them to do. They hit the alarm and notified us. And at the end of the day, that's all we can ask them to do. The Quick Reaction Force, they were awake, clothed, weapons on them. And the February 17th militia responded in a prompt manner.

Q And you had indicated that certainly as regards the local Guard Force, that you communicated in part through gestures because you did not speak Arabic, and not all of them spoke English?

A Correct.

Q Did you feel that even despite some of the language challenges, you were able to adequately communicate with the other security support personnel to get them to, you know, do what you needed them to do to secure the compound?

A During that event?

Q During that event, yes.

A During that event, yes, our Quick Reaction Force members spoke English fairly well. Two of them spoke it very well, and so I was able to relay to them; and then I believe one of our local Guard Force supervisors came into work in response to that, and he spoke English as well. So I was able to tell him, and from there they followed directions.

Q And in the aftermath of this incident, did you on the compound, the DS team, take any particular security measures to adjust and kind of change your security posture?

A Yeah. I believe immediately after the attack, we shut down all movements for, you know, 24, 48 hours. Measures beyond that, that



evening [REDACTED] had an event she had to go to; and so instead of sending a driver and an agent, two agents went with her. I was the driver. The RSO went as the agent in charge. But, you know, other than that, you know, we would encourage meetings to be had on compound, but I don't know if that came about as a result of that attack or just later.

Q And with regard to the movement off compound with the principal officer, [REDACTED], that following day, did you have any -- did anything occur that caused you any concern during that movement?

A No. No, ma'am.

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q How did the local population react in response to the IED attack?

A You know I can't really, you know, comment on that. My job was just to get the compound fixed, up and running, keep the principal officer safe. Outside of our -- I mean, our local Guard Force felt bad. You know, our local QRF militia guys felt bad about it, but other than that, I was not engaging local Libyans in any way, shape or form.

Q After this very direct attack, were there any discussions about the safety of remaining in Benghazi?

A Not that I have knowledge of. You know, after the attack, I'm sure I had a conversation with the RSO and said, hey, what's going on here what are we -- you know, it's a little after action, but again, back to the chain of command thing, I'd been on the job year and a half, and those conversations were above my level.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q And just in that after-action conversation, that would have been with Mr. --

A [REDACTED]

Q [REDACTED] And do you recall, did you make any recommendation to him that you felt that there either needed to be a change in the security posture in Benghazi or a reassessment as to staying in Benghazi at that point in time?

A No, ma'am, not that I can recall. I mean we had -- I'm sure we had conversations about the security environment and stuff like that, but specifics of a conversation, no.

Q And coming out of those conversations, did you feel that whatever measures you had taken were adequate?

A My impression was we did the best with what we had. You know, with one point of clarification, I think anybody in the law enforcement, security, or military role, if you tell them that they could use more resources, they're always going to tell you they can use more resources. You know, I definitely want to clarify that.

Q But with regard to the incident that you experienced on the compound, you felt like you had the resources you needed to respond in that incident?

A In that incident, our security mechanisms responded and went as they should have.

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q Do you recall any other security incidents occurring while

you were there?

A There was, 5 days later, there was an RPG attack on the British Ambassador's motorcade. There was a bomb placed at the International Committee of the Red Cross. There were IEDs. There were -- I mean, there was lots of stuff going on.

Q Can you talk about the RPG attack on the motorcade, what happened?

A Yes. The British Ambassador was in Tripoli, I mean sorry in Benghazi and was returning to their -- they had a residence set up there. I don't know if it was a mission or not. They were returning to their facility. And on the way back, a RPG, an individual stepped out -- sorry. Let me back up. They were driving in a three-car motorcade. An individual in an RPG stepped out as they were approximately 500 meters or so from their facility, fired an RPG, hit the lead car injuring two of the British force protection officers inside. Those two individuals were able to, despite substantial injuries, were able to kick out the glass and drive on to their compound. And from there I got a call from the U.S. Embassy in Tripoli saying, hey, the British motorcade's been hit. At the time we heard the explosion. We just didn't know what it was. So, then shortly after, I got a call from the Regional Security Office -- I believe it was [REDACTED] -- saying, that hey, the British Ambassador's motorcade's been hit. They need some help. So, the rest of the conversation we can talk about at the classified level.

Q Okay. Did this security incident raise or trigger any

changes for the mission Benghazi's security posture?

A You know, again, afterwards we probably encouraged the principal officer, as many of your meetings as you can hold here at the facility, let's have them at the facility instead of having our meetings off compound. But at the end of the day, that decision rested with the principal officer, and we were there to support the principal officer.

Q And I understand that shortly after the attack on the U.K. Ambassador, that the U.K. ended up leaving Benghazi. Were you at all aware of maybe what some of the reasons were for their departure, if they were going to be coming back at any point?

A My impression at the time was that they left due to the security environment. As a clarification again, they did not have -- [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] so any time they would come out, they would use that as their facility. They did not have the security footprint that we did.

Q Did you get a sense at all for what the cause of some of these attacks were or who was perpetrating these attacks?

A No. I mean, I think the cause was, you know, targeting Western interests. But, you know, I think the targeted the Red Crescent attacks were, there were, there were reports, there were rumors going around Benghazi that the International Committee of the Red Cross, the Red Crescent over there, was proselytizing, and something they vehemently denied and we did not believe to be true at

all, but once the rumor got out there, it was kind of hard to bring that one back in. So, that's an assumption on my part, but I do not have any concrete evidence as to these were the groups perpetrating the attacks, these were the groups, and this was their motivation.

Q Was there any sense that the security environment might improve after a certain point in time? I understand that the elections were coming up. Was that at all considered --

A You know, I mean, I think we all hope and want the situation to get better, but, you know, in all honesty my focus was just taking care of the needs of the mission right there. I mean, we were tracking the atmospherics on the ground, but as far as tracking public events, political events, stuff like that, the political officer or the principal officers would have more information on that.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Before we leave the incident with the attack on the Ambassador's convoy, I know there's parts of that that you might prefer to talk about in the classified setting. Can you talk to us just a little bit about what you -- you said you had gotten a call from Tripoli -- what you actually then did after you got that call in response to that particular attack?

A To get into that would all have to be in a classified setting to provide the proper context for you.

Q Okay. It's our understanding that the U.K. Ambassador was fairly grateful for the response --

A Yes, ma'am.

Q -- that they had received?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q How did you learn about that gratitude?

A The Permanent Under Secretary to the United Kingdom sent a letter over to Deputy Secretary Burns, thanking him for the Benghazi Quick Reaction Force, and then Secretary Burns pushed that out to the Embassy, and one of the desk officers in Washington, D.C. forwarded that out to me.

Q Did you feel with regard to you received that commendation, did you feel that you had the resources you needed to be able to assist when you guys were called upon to assist in that particular incident?

A I felt like I had access to resources.

Q And you indicated that the British, at least, did not have the same security footprint --

A Correct.

Q -- in Benghazi that, the United States had?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q In what ways did you feel that the U.S. was, had a different footprint?

A Well, for example, when the British would leave, they would bring their vehicles and their weapons and store them over on our compound. So, they did not have a 24/7 security presence in Benghazi. They had people living there, but they did not have any security professionals, to my understanding, living there.

Q And what about, you had mentioned in the last hour some other countries who were present, some Western countries and entities. How did you feel that the U.S. security footprint compared to some of those other Western countries?

A Substantially greater.

Q Can you give us an example?

A An anecdotal piece of evidence would be, I don't know which country, but some of the countries were if their Embassy came under attack, they were coming to our compound for safety.

Q And with regard to the -- do you recall whether or not there were any particular steps taken with regard to off-compound moves? The attack on the U.K. Ambassador occurred during an off-compound, return from an off-compound move, while they were out on the road. Do you recall whether or not there was a discussion or steps taken about altering how you guys did off-compound moves?

A You know, I believe as the security environment over there was changing, we took even greater steps to make sure we were constantly altering our routes, whether it be going out the gate, making a left or right, going out the rear gate, returning from opposite, taking substantial detours prior to going back to the compound, just so we could vary our routes. Those were the steps we took.

Q And we had heard some mention of talk about using diplomatic plates or not using diplomatic plates on vehicles?

A Yes.

Q Do you recall what the practice was while you were there?

A After the -- at one point we were pushed to have diplomatic plates. I believe -- I'm sorry. I received notification, hey, the vehicles had to have diplomatic plates on them. So okay. We put diplomatic plates on there. These are bright red license plates. After the British Ambassador's motorcade got hit, we went and just took the license plates off all our vehicles. A lot of the vehicles in Libya at the time did not have plates. And so, we felt if we removed the license plates, that's something that could maybe buy us a little more time and keep somebody from identifying us.

Q So part of that was an effort to kind of lessen the profiles so that you were less obvious when you were making moves?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q You indicated that kind of as the environment was changing, you would discuss and take steps that you felt were necessary to adjust to that changing environment. Was it your sense then that people understood and were cognizant of the change in the environment?

A Could you clarify who you mean as people?

Q Well, the people on the ground, certainly you --

A Us in Benghazi at the mission?

Q Yes.

A Okay. I feel like the personnel, the American personnel at the mission in Benghazi had a good grasp of the security environment on the ground, yes, ma'am.

Q And you were making adjustments as needed on a daily, weekly basis to adjust to how you felt the environment was changing?



A We were. You know, I mean as much as we could adjust, we would adjust, whether routes, times, departures, or just not leaving the compound, or things like that, meeting times, changing a meeting time at the last minute. Okay. Like, hey, do you mind if we go meet here versus there, something like that.

Q And I know you had indicated when talking about the team and the reporting structure, that you weren't certainly the primary person who would report to Tripoli or certainly to Main State?

A I would be the last person.

Q But did you feel that your experience, the experience on the ground, was being communicated to Tripoli?

A I feel like our principal officers, you know, as they should be, are the ones that are doing the reporting on Benghazi, and I felt like they were good advocates. I felt like they were good at conveying information.

Q And when you say good advocates, what do you mean by that?

A They were just trying to let people outside of Benghazi know the environment and the situation on the ground.

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q Do you recall any other incidents beyond the U.K. Ambassador and the June 6 IED attack? You mentioned that there had been a couple other events.

A There was daily, nightly, you'd hear explosions. There were IEDs, there were assassinations, none of them targeting Western or American interests at that time. There was a security incident,

another security incident; a bomb was placed out at the International Committee at the Red Cross there in Benghazi, separate from the RPG attack.

Q Did the mission take any steps after any of these other incidents to increase the security posture or make any changes?

A You know, there wasn't a lot of steps or things we could change on the compound. There was, you know, three to five of us out there. So, as much as we could vary, change routes, you know, we maintained communication with our QRF personnel because they kind of had their ear to the ground. Our local guard force guys would bring us reports, and we would collect information informally that way. And we, you know would kind of use that information like what are we going to do for today, are we going to move, are we not going to move, stuff like that.

Q So what was your sense, considering you got to Benghazi about a week before the IED attack, and this was your first overseas post, was the security environment shocking to you considering there were daily attacks, assassination attempts? Was this something you felt like you expected to come across there, or how did the people around you also respond to that environment?

A Yeah. As a clarification, I had done a protective ops TDY in northern Iraq prior to this. And so it wasn't a post. It was a TDY assignment. Both of these were TDYs. And in Iraq, we were driving, you know, motorcades, long-range moves around northern Iraq through like, you know, sketchy places, and that was also just part

of the job. You know, I never expected to get hit by an IED. That was a bit of a surprise. But, you know, I won't say I had a whole lot of expectations going into Benghazi. It was, friends of mine that had done it earlier said they had a good time there and said it was a pretty calm environment, but they had been there substantially prior to me so --

Q Did you ever participate in any of the emergency action committees?

A No, I did not.

Q No. Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So just out of curiosity, Mr. [REDACTED] did speak with the Oversight and Government Reform Committee, and he had indicated that every so often he would go out and get pizza, pizza for the compound, and pizza for the QRF. Were you ever able to take advantage of his --

A Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. We would go order pizza. There was a DVD shop that we would go to and buy DVDs and watch movies and stuff like that. But, again, you know, we generally had two DS agents going out there both with arms in an armored vehicle at an unscheduled time, you know, so felt like we could mitigate it that way.

Q So some of the incidents, it does sound like there was certainly a flurry of incidents that occurred pretty shortly after you had gotten there.

A Yes.

Q That must have been shaken you up some, at least a little?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And did you talk with anyone about that? Did you share that with friends? Did you find a way to kind of express how you felt the experience was going?

A Yes, ma'am. I had some fairly colorful emails with some good friends of mine back in [REDACTED]

Q And those exchanges, was the intent, like explain to me a little bit, when you say colorful exchanges, kind of what you were expressing to them and why you were expressing --

A A friend of mine, [REDACTED], sent me an email saying are you okay? I replied back "shit went boom" and then something colorful after that. These guys were people who were just my good friends, and I've been on the sending side of those emails multiple times. Any time there's an IED or a VBIED, the Foreign Service is a very small community, and so any time there's an attack or a bomb somewhere, all of us are in touch one way or another.

So you just reach out like, hey, are you okay. You know, and that was just, you know, he could have reached out from me from his Gmail account to my Yahoo account. But, he had his Blackberry. I had my State up, and that is purely a personal email to let him know, hey, yeah, it's okay. You know, it's bad over here, you know, but we're okay. You know, going to be fine. You know, just letting him know, hey, don't worry.

You know, also once they realized I was okay, and once I realized I was -- once I realized I was okay, and once they realized I was okay,

there was also some, you know, thought you got blown up and I didn't totally freak out. That's good to know. It was something nice for me to learn about myself. You know, not having any military or law enforcement background, you know, you never know what you're going to do in an environment until something like that actually happens.

So, with the security procedures working the way they should, I was proud of myself. So there was a little bit of, you know, hey, I'm okay, and, you know, I just took an IED. Look at me now. I'm okay. There was a handful of emails. Some of those emails were sent not 4 hours after being hit with an IED. So, you know, there was definitely some colorful language that, you know, State probably wouldn't like. No, no. I'm just kidding. Sorry.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Besides your emails kind of amongst colleagues and friends that you were in the service with, did you ever feel the need to send kind of a more formal communication, either by email or picking up the phone and talking to someone, to express concerns that you had on the ground?

A Yes, there was an incident.

Q And can you explain that incident to us?

A Yes. In July sometime, I'm not sure when. I believe it to be July. Could be wrong on that. But there was a proposed move out to Cyrene, Cyrenaica. It's a historical, very historical old site, archeological site, lots of historical value. And one of the individuals on the compound proposed going out there, and it appeared

to me to be a tourist trip. So, again, that was just my impression. To my knowledge, there was no official government meetings that took place out there. But, again, I was not there on the move. Wanted to go out there. I raised concerns with another ARSO [REDACTED]. I raised my concerns with the acting RSO at the time, [REDACTED]. This place was about 30 to 50 kilometers away from an area called Derna, which is a hotbed of terrorist activity and continues to be to this day. And going out there, there was one or two routes going out there.

You know, we had to notify the Ministry of Foreign Affairs through formal channels prior to our departure who would then have to notify their local counterparts and set up a meeting with the museum. So, in other words, we were letting people in Cyrene, Cyrenaica, know that a U.S. delegation was coming out there 5 days in advance. So to me, you know, these factors caused me concern. I presented them to the ARSO, [REDACTED]. I presented them to [REDACTED], who was my boss, who had been on about 8 to 10 years longer than me, and he overruled me. He's my boss. That's his prerogative. I still just had some concerns about it, so I reached out to [REDACTED], not as a formal reporting, not as trying to go around my chain of command, but as, you know, [REDACTED], you are somebody that served here prior as an RSO. You have knowledge on the ground. I have concerns. Can you please provide me some guidance. So, I laid that out to him in an email. I didn't hear back from him. So, from not hearing back from [REDACTED] and from getting overruled by [REDACTED], you know, I assumed as two people that had both been on a lot longer than me, you know, both been RSOs in Benghazi,

overruled me, and that's what that was. So, I supported the trip from the TOC, and that was that.

Q And where was Mr. [REDACTED] when you had sent him that email?

A He was back to his permanent assignment as an assistant regional security officer at the U.S. Consulate or Embassy in Abu Dhabi.

Q So you hadn't reached out to anyone then currently in Tripoli about this particular movement?

A No, ma'am. If I had reached out to somebody in Tripoli or gone back to DS headquarters, for me that would have been then more about going around my chain of command. Whereas I just wanted some guidance from somebody that's been on longer than me and somebody that was the RSO in Benghazi.

Q And you had indicated to the extent you feel comfortable certainly, who did then, you said, you know once the movement was going to go forward, you did support that from the TOC?

A Yes.

Q So you basically played your part. Were there any incidents during that particular movement?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you recall who went on the movement?

A [REDACTED], and [REDACTED], I believe one or two of our drivers, and the personnel from our, the four guys from the QRF force that live on the compound. I'm not sure if two or three of them went. One of them stayed back though. I do know that.

Q So, to your credit in an instance where you were uncomfortable with a particular movement, you certainly voiced that to your supervisor?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q During your time in Benghazi, were there other instances where you were uncomfortable with either a planned movement or security on the compound?

A No, ma'am. I mean, it was a very dynamic environment. There was, you know, lots of activity happening in Benghazi, so, you know, anything that was not 100 percent secure caused us some concern, but nothing along the lines of the move out to Cyrenaica.

Q And did you feel like, even with this, you know, with this back and forth, did you feel like the team worked well in terms of communicating concerns and working out, you know, kind of how to make any particular movement or any particular daily activities as secure as possible?

A Not in relation to that move. Other stuff, yes. Other stuff, yes.

Q Setting aside that particular instance that you've described --

A Yeah, like I said, we would adjust routes. We would adjust time and dates. We really impressed on the principal officer, [REDACTED], at this time that, hey, any meeting you can, please have it here at the compound; and for the most part he was really great about accommodating that. He saw the security value for that, and he was



on board.

Ms. Sawyer. Let's go off the record just for a second.

[Discussion off the record.]

Ms. Sawyer. Okay. So we'll just go back on the record.

Mr. Evers. I think he had a clarification for the record if he could.

Ms. Sawyer. Sure, absolutely.

Mr. [REDACTED] Just to make quick clarification, earlier in referencing emails back and forth, I said, you know, my emails with my colleagues, they could have come forward from his Gmail to my Yahoo. I said that in the sense that they were personal in nature. I have no memory of sending any emails Benghazi work related from my personal email account. To the best of my memory, everything I did was on state.gov account. So --

Ms. Sawyer. So, just to be perfectly clear, you just used that description because you felt like these were exchanges with a friend, not --

Mr. [REDACTED] Correct. I used that description to imply that these were just non-work-related, personal emails; and, therefore, since they were personal emails, they could have gone over Yahoo or Gmail. I don't have any memory of sending any emails, work-related emails, to my Yahoo or doing business on that.

Ms. Sawyer. So, I think we'll conclude our first round, and we'll turn it back to our colleagues in the majority. We'll go back off the record.

[Recess.]

MS. JACKSON:

Q In the last hour, you talked about how you conversed with some of your colleagues who had been in Benghazi on a TDY prior to you, and they had described it as kind of a calm atmosphere. Would you say that your experience was a little different than what they had experienced earlier on?

A Substantially.

Q Substantially. And we have gone through several of those incidents. Are those incidents that we have talked about, the IED in the wall, the attack on the U.K. Ambassador, the Red Cross and things, were those the type of things that you found made it substantially different?

A I would say that and then just the day-to-day instability of the area, not knowing who's in charge, and just the IED activity.

Q So, there were daily IEDs?

A In the distance I could hear explosions going off on a fairly regular basis.

Q Okay.

A And that's all I can -- their size or weight or targets or stuff like that, I don't know. I just heard a lot of booms while I was over there.

Q Okay. And you also talked in the last hour about there were assassinations or assassination attempts while you were there. Is that correct?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And were they increasing in number or severity while you were there?

A Yeah. I didn't really have a baseline before it or afterwards. I just knew the activity was occurring. Whether it increased in intensity, you know, there were quiet times, and then there were just crazy times. So, it was just in waves more than anything else.

Q But that wasn't something that had been reported to you by others who had been in Benghazi before?

A Correct ma'am. That was new to Benghazi.

Q Okay. And I believe you also said in the last hour that the assassinations or attempted assassinations, apart from the U.K. Ambassador, were generally directed at non-Westerners. Did I understand that correctly?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And were they -- was there any type of group that it was directed at? I mean, was it the new government officials? Was it Qadhafi regime loyalists? Do you have any sense?

A What we were told, the locals would always say that it was former Qadhafi loyalists. People who were just, you know, evening the score, you know, taking out old grudges.

Q Did you receive any other type of information that was different than what you were told by the locals?

A That's classified level.

Q Okay. All right. Well, can you answer yes or no, and then I know whether to ask you the follow-up question then at classified level?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So there is additional information?

A It will from my recollection from two and a half years ago.

Q Okay. Yes. Okay.

A Just to caveat that, so it will vague, but yes.

Q You talked in the last hour that when the U.K. Ambassador was travelling, he was in a three-car motorcade. Did I hear that correctly?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And when the principal officer would go out when you would do movements, would you follow a three-car motorcade movement pattern -- I don't know what you call it -- or would you do something different?

A No, ma'am. We had one vehicle. The movements, ours were a lot more low profile than the Ambassador's motorcade.

Q Okay.

A So while the footprint's different, if done correctly, you can do low-profile moves with a lot smaller footprint without comprising security.

Q Is that something that you were taught to do in your high-threat training that you received?

A It's one of the things we learned during training, yes,

ma'am.

Q And I would assume that -- and correct me if I'm wrong -- that taking off the diplomatic plates would -- how do I say that -- increase the lower profile? That seems a little awkward, but if you know what I mean?

A Yes. It would make it more of a lower profile. In addition, there were a lot -- in my experience there were a large number of vehicles there was no license plates on them. So having a license plate on our vehicle, much less a license plate of a different color, is something that made us stand out.

Q So you were blending in more with the local color as it would be?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And, who had the requirement that you were to use diplomatic plates? Was that something that the new Libyan government requested? Was that something that was U.S. State Department policy, if you know?

A That's just something I was told by my RSO, and so, I mean, obviously it was coming from higher ups. Looking back, my impression of it was that was directed by the Libyan Government.

Q Okay. In the aftermath of either the IED attack or the attack on the U.K. Ambassador or any of the others, when you would make recommendations that you needed to restrict movements, I believe you said, and I was writing and didn't hear all of your answer, but that on occasion made the principal officer unhappy?

A No, no. I'm sorry.

Q I may have just misheard.

A If I said that, yeah, I want to clarify that. The principal officer was not unhappy. The principal officer the majority of the time concurred with that recommendation, had a full appreciation of the security environment on the ground, and sometimes the principal officer listened to us also because, we generally had been there, although junior in the organization, we had been in Benghazi longer than -- I had been in Benghazi longer than other people. So, I had the longest shortest term memory of what was going on there.

Q Okay. And then the one exception to that was this one trip to the museum near Derna. Is that correct?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And as to that trip, and, again, I just want to make sure that I understood your answer, did you describe Derna as the hotbed of terrorism?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. And what did you mean by that? Could you elaborate on that?

A At the time we just believed there to be a lot of, you know, terrorist activity or sympathizers out there in that region, a lot of Salafists. A lot more fundamentalists were out there. They had safe haven there. They had shelter there. Other motorcades going to and from there. A U.N. motorcade went out there, and they got fired upon, you know, so -- it was kind of a stay-away area.

Q Did they take any of the U.N. personnel hostage at that time? Do you recall?

A Not while I was there.

Q Not while you were there. Was that an area that you saw any portion of the new Libyan Government trying to deal with, and if so, what was your assessment of how effectively they were able to deal with it?

A The only thing I really saw of the new Libyan Government was the Supreme Security Council that would show up and set up in front of our compound. Other than that I didn't really see or experience -- I mean, the principal officer would. But he would go into a meeting, and I would stay outside while he did his meeting.

Q And the Supreme Security Council was the equivalent of the local police department?

A I believe so. It was my recollection from two and a half years ago, but it seemed like it was an organization that they were trying to bring other militias underneath it to kind of have like a unifying authority. You know, and so they were responsible -- my apologies. Let me clarify. They had police-type vehicles out in front of our compound. They were one of the ones providing security.

Q Okay. So, they appeared to be more law enforcement related as opposed to military?

A I won't draw that conclusion just because in some countries there is not really clearly defined between law enforcement and military, and certain groups function as both.

Q Okay.

A For me I saw them as, in my business and my work, I saw them as a law enforcement entity.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. That's all I have. Go ahead.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Okay. Thank you. I'm going to get back on track with some questions just chronologically we're walking through, but I want to piggyback on my colleague's one point on the museum in Derna?

A Okay.

Q Just so I understand the communication lines, so you had reservations about going out to the museum. Correct?

A Correct.

Q You communicated those reservations up to your, you know, RSO?

A Correct.

Q Were there any communications between you and the PO? Did the PO know that you had those concerns to your knowledge?

A I did not communicate those concerns to the principal officer. I communicated -- again, being a junior agent there, I communicated to the RSO; and what he did with them, I don't know what conversations he may or may not have had with the principal officer.

Q Okay. So, do you think the PO would have known there were some reservation with respect to the DS about doing this trip?

A Again, that's only if the regional security officer brought them up. The principal officer, I believe, was a GS-15 equivalent



senior person, in the State Department, so I wasn't going to try and tell him what to do.

Q Sure. Very good. Okay. Just, let me hit on a few quick, I'm trying to move through this, just culture issues and what was the environment. Did Libyans have ready access to weapons, explosives, or other types of items that can do harm to people?

A Yes, sir.

Q And can you tell us what types did they, you know, did you observe them having or hear --

A There was a lot of AK-47s were readily available. Pistols were available, but they were substantially more expensive. You could purchase old Soviet-era type weapons, you know, RPGs, stuff like that, if you wanted to. Again, they were all available, there for people with funding. Explosive-wise, they used a thing over there, it's called Gelatina. And the best way I can describe it is some kind of fuel or something. And after Qadhafi was thrown out, they would use this Gelatina to go fishing. You know, they would throw the bomb in the water; bomb goes off; fish come up. Pretty effective.

Ms. Jackson. Did you actually witness that while you were over there?

Mr. [REDACTED] No, but we believe the Gelatina is also what they commonly use to repurpose and use to do other things, attacks and stuff like that. It was readily available.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q How about anti-aircraft weapons?

A Yes. Readily available -- I mean, how easily the average person could purchase them?

Q Sure.

A I don't know, but I saw militias -- they were a common site. I'll say that.

Q What about protests? When you were there, were there any protests?

A No, sir. There was a rally, rally there but --

Q Do you remember about when that time was?

A Mid to late June.

Q Can you tell us a little bit about that? I mean, this sort of dovetails into the security incident, but go ahead.

A Right. Right. As was reported to me by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], so secondhand and 2 and a half years ago, it was a large number of technicals flying what we called the black flag, the flag associated with Ansar al-Sharia or whatever, came together for a rally in Benghazi, and as I was told, this was a surprise to local authorities.

Q The rally was a surprise?

A Implying the local authorities did not have knowledge that it was going to take place.

Q Are you familiar with the area called Freedom Square?

A No, sir. I mean I've driven around all over Benghazi, but --

Q Sure. Sure. And so with respect to protests, any other

protests during your time there, small, large, general?

A Well there was a university, there was a couple universities there. I think there might have been a protest at a hospital or something like that, but unless the protest resulted in serious violence or was directed towards Americans, it would come up on our radar but wouldn't stay there long.

Q Depending on if the Member comes back in, I may touch on one other security incident. But we will --

A Good to go.

Q But we'll move on that. Some quick exhibits I mentioned to your counsel that we sort of want to run through.

Mr. Evers. Are there multiple copies of that?

Ms. Jackson. Yeah, sticker 1, hand it to him, and then we'll hand out the rest of the copies.

Mr. Evers. Are these multiple copies of the same thing?

Ms. Jackson. Yeah, I think so.

Mr. Evers. No, they aren't.

Ms. Jackson. No. Is it a packet?

Mr. Grider. Yes.

Mr. Evers. We need stickers on each and every one.

Mr. Grider. So there would be 5 exhibits.

Mr. Evers. Can I get a spare stack?

Mr. Grider. All right. There's a way to do this. I'm going to mark my own exhibits.

I'm going to hand it to him.

Ms. Jackson. Why don't we go off the record for a couple minutes and let him take a look at all of them.

[Recess.]

Mr. Grider. We are ready to go back on the record.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q I would like to direct your attention to the June 6 incident.

A Okay.

Q Can you just give us a brief overview of what happened? I know you talked about it before, and then there are going to be some quick questions on that.

A Yes, sir, on June 6, approximately, 3:00 in the morning, give or take 30 minutes, the imminent danger notification system alarm went off. At that point I woke up, I got dressed quickly, put on my kit, ammunition, medical kit, tourniquet, smoke, all that stuff, ballistic helmet, grabbed my M4, and I went outside to investigate why the alarm was going off.

Once I went outside, I approached the gate, and I saw the guards gathered around the gate. And they were making a gesture to me with their hands towards their nose like indicating they smelled something. As I approached, I smelled this very distinct chemical burning-type of smell, later on to find out it was a fuse -- shortly afterwards to find out it was a fuse. And then I smelled that. I pulled everyone back. As we were pulling back, the bomb detonated, went off about

20 yards away from me, knocked me back, ears were ringing. I got up, ran back to the bunker that was right there by Villa C, got behind the bunker, dug down, took my M4 out, pointed it towards the hole in the wall and waited for up for any possible followup attack.

That followup attack never occurred. At the same time, not at the same time, shortly thereafter, very shortly thereafter, February 17th Martyrs Brigade personnel arrived, and I went out there to talk with them, as we had this large hole in our wall, pushed out the perimeter on both sides of the compound. There was a small street that ran in front of the compound. So, I asked the 17th February Martyrs Brigade and other individuals there to block off the street on both ends about 100 yards each way, to prevent any foot or vehicular traffic from coming our way.

Once that perimeter was set up, due to the alarm, we had lost positive control of the facility. So, I grabbed one of the QRF personnel members, and went through, and we tactically cleared the entire facility, making sure no other objects come over it, making sure no other individuals had entered the facility. At that point once it was deemed the facility clear, the all clear was given over the radio. And at that point, the RSO simply unlocked the door and let the Principal Officer out of the safe haven.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And the 17th Feb individuals that you have described as responded, these were separate and distinct from the February 17th QRF members that you had?

A Yes, ma'am, thank you for the clarification. Yes, ma'am. They responded from their base that was close by.

Q Do you recall approximately how many there were that responded?

A No, ma'am. I mean, there was a handful of vehicles that showed up but the second authority started arriving. My concentration was getting the perimeter pushed out, dealing with the hole in our wall, and then turning around and clearing our compound. So, over the next 15, 20 minutes more people, more authorities, more police showed up, but how many were there in that moment, I don't recall.

Ms. Jackson. Yeah.

Mr. Westmoreland. When the rapid response folks took a, you know, turned up, were these vehicles like technicals?

Mr. [REDACTED] They had a -- I do not know if a technical showed up. They all showed up heavily armed. And it was definitely a show of force. To say I recall what -- to say one way or another whether I saw a technical, would be lying either way. I just don't recall it.

Mr. Westmoreland. Were you aware that they had technicals at their disposal?

Mr. [REDACTED] Oh, yes. Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Is there any video that shows what happened there? I mean --

Mr. [REDACTED] There is a video showing a detonation on our compound on Villa C. There was a really high, I think a water tower or something like that, and there was a camera up on that. It was a fixed camera

that was looking down at the gate. All you see is, -- it's dark, a bunch of fuzziness, and then a bright red boom, and then nothing. You can't make out faces. You can kind of see a pixelated person moving around, but that's about all the details that you can see.

Mr. Westmoreland. So that was a security camera?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir, that was one of our Embassy secured cameras.

Mr. Westmoreland. So, it doesn't sound like it would provide a lot of security if you couldn't really distinguish who was doing what.

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir, I would agree.

Mr. Westmoreland. And you know, you said every law enforcement officer or security agent always wants more help.

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. I mean, I understand that. I mean, you know, you can never have enough. But you know, if you are -- if you are handling a traffic accident, or you know, or a crime scene and, you know, you want some additional security to secure the crime scene or direct traffic, or whatever, that is one thing.

Mr. [REDACTED] Sure.

Mr. Westmoreland. When you are talking about being the only five or six Americans in Benghazi, Libya, that's something else, and especially after a bomb, you know, goes off there. So, to me, that is a little bit different.

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. So if everybody, if, you know, everybody wants



some more security, did they ask for it?

Mr. [REDACTED] You know, I believe we -- I talked with my RSO about additional DS personnel, you know, like, hey, can we get more bodies? What's going on? But where he went with that conversation, or how far it went up the chain from there, I mean -- I mean, it's pretty clear. Three bodies was not sufficient.

Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah. Especially since you were the only one --

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. -- behind the sandbags, or in a fighting position.

Mr. [REDACTED] Correct.

Mr. Westmoreland. And you have heard of a tripwire, I'm sure?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Was this a tripwire? I mean, did you all file a tripwire incident, or whatever?

Mr. [REDACTED] Traditionally, tripwires are going to be maintained at the Embassy. That's where they are going to be set up. To be honest with you, sir, I don't even know if we had -- I did not have visibility on any tripwires for Benghazi.

Mr. Westmoreland. No, I mean as far as the State Department, when you say tripwire, that, you know, is --

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. -- anything political or change in the atmosphere.

Mr. [REDACTED] Generally, sir, for tripwires, tripwires are clearly defined actions or moments in time set out by State Department. And you know, with DS-like security input. And so we say tripwires, that is generally a formalized document. If this happens, then we are going to do this. And so as far as what tripwires were set in Benghazi, versus what actually got -- which tripwires got tripped, I never saw a document with: This is a tripwire. This is not a tripwire, or we need to readjust our tripwires.

Mr. Westmoreland. Would blowing a hole in the perimeter wall, in your opinion, be a tripwire?

Mr. [REDACTED] I would, sir, I would definitely call it a significant event. I would have to rethink some things.

Mr. Westmoreland. And would you call the British Ambassador being -- his motorcade being attacked, would that be a tripwire?

Mr. [REDACTED] Generally, attack on a Western personnel, attack on a Western diplomatic personnel, you know, again, I didn't see any tripwires, but if I was right, that would probably be there.

Mr. Westmoreland. When -- and you don't know that any help -- you all talked about it, but you don't know how far it went up as far as getting additional help. But would you say that that incident made your awareness greater that you needed additional help?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir. Yes, sir. I would say that. I mean, that incident definitely made me realize, hey, there's --

Mr. Westmoreland. Do you think the RSO had that same feeling, that -- I mean, I know you can't read his mind.

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Mr. Westmoreland. But I mean, did he ever express that?

Mr. [REDACTED] I think all of us here on the ground had some concerns about the security situation.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did you ever hear the principal officer, did she ever express any concern?

Mr. [REDACTED] All I know is at one point [REDACTED], the principal officer, had a conversation, a teleconference, a phone conference, with multiple personnel involving DS and, it you know, at one point his requests were shot down. What his requests were, I don't recall.

Mr. Westmoreland. This was the IMO?

Mr. [REDACTED] No, sir, [REDACTED], the principal officer, the principal officer --

Mr. Westmoreland. Oh, okay.

Mr. [REDACTED] -- in the July timeframe.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. But you don't know --

Mr. [REDACTED] I know he spoke with somebody from Diplomatic Security and he wasn't too happy about things. But that's the --

Mr. Westmoreland. But you don't know if he talked to anybody at Tripoli, at the --

Mr. [REDACTED] No, sir, I don't.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q So, it is your understanding that [REDACTED] was talking

with someone from Diplomatic Security back at main State at headquarters?

A Yeah, at one point he did have a phone call.

Q Okay. And that was for generally more DS agents or more DS support?

A The guy, I mean, honestly all I knew was that he was talking to somebody on the phone call, with somebody at DS and he came back fairly displeased with the conversation.

Q And do you recall anything that he may have said?

A No, ma'am. I don't. Again, being in DS for a year-and-a-half and him being a one, a principal officer, I just kind of said, yes, sir, and did my thing.

Mr. Westmoreland. One other real quick.

Mr. Grider. Please go ahead.

Mr. Westmoreland. Ms. [REDACTED] was there when you first got there?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes. That's correct.

Mr. Westmoreland. Do they ever debrief? I mean, was she there on TDY, or was she, I mean --

Mr. [REDACTED] As I understand, she was there on a TDY just like us.

Mr. Westmoreland. From the States?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Do they ever debrief people when they come back? I mean, did they ever debrief you about what you thought about the situation, or anything?

Mr. [REDACTED] No. There is no -- there is not a formal debrief. You know, I talked to some of my colleagues, my supervisors back in the [REDACTED] field office asked me questions and stuff like that, but that was the extent.

Mr. Westmoreland. So after -- when you get back from wherever, they don't ask you how things are going, or if, you know -- the food is good, or the beds are comfortable?

Mr. [REDACTED] That's about the extent. I did meet and talk with [REDACTED], shortly after the attack. So I talked to them for a while. I talked to them on a couple of occasions, but that's really been the extent of the formal debriefing, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Thank you.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Just on this the PO [REDACTED], can you help me to just -- when did this -- to your knowledge, when did this conversation occur, you know, that he had with the Main State?

A Mid to late July.

Q Okay. Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Was there an event that precipitated it? Was it over the trip to the museum, or --

A I -- no, I don't think the trip to the museum ever rose above [REDACTED]. What precipitated it, I don't know.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Okay. And does this connect up with your earlier statement

of the POs, you know, they know the situation on the ground. They are good advocates for us. Was that somewhat of the basis of that statement, [REDACTED] trying to communicate that message, or was there something different?

A No, I think -- I'm not sure what message [REDACTED] was trying to communicate, so I don't want to imply that. But I do want to reiterate that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] both -- I was confident in their knowledge and their understanding of the security situation and the overall environment on the ground.

Q And was -- just to be clear, June 6, who was there? Was [REDACTED] there?

A [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Q Okay. All right, let's just touch on these emails, and just to provide just total respect, if anybody went back, you know, and read your emails, so this is not a cross examination. It is just a general trying to get a better understanding and refreshing your recollection of some of your experiences. So that's all we want to do here.

A Okay.

Q Okay. All right, we can walk through this. So Government Exhibit 1, and I will read the Bates Stamp, does that work well for you?

Mr. Evers. If you want to call it a Bates Stamp, please do.

Mr. Grider. Oh, okay.

Ms. Jackson. Document number.

Mr. Grider. Thank you. C as in Charlie 05391786.

Mr. Evers. Thank you.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Do you want to just read, I guess, half the sentence there and then we can explain what you meant, or when this occurred? I'm sorry.

A This email, is an email I sent in response to one of my friends at the [REDACTED] field office checking in on me. [REDACTED] is a good friend; actually we went on to be roommates. He reached out to me and said: "Everyone okay," on June 6th. My response to him shortly thereafter was: "Shit went boom -- bomb blew a hole in the front wall next to the office around 3:00 a.m."

Q Okay, let me pause. Earlier when you were being asked a question by the minority, you were using the phrase, the security environment was changing. Just to be clear, was it getting better, or was it getting worse in your opinion?

A In my opinion it was getting worse.

Q Okay. All right, let's go to document, or Exhibit 2, document number Charlie 05391774.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Just the first, you know, you did a good job on the first document. You just want to read the first few sentences or just explain

and walk through it? Go ahead?

A Yeah, this is another email from [REDACTED], special agent in the [REDACTED] field office, another guy who is a good friend and continues to be a good friend of mine who is scheduled to come out there for a TDY.

We were working on the dates and the logistics, and so he is asking some information. "I replied back to him: No worries, Brother.

[REDACTED] is taking care of the dates. He will forward the info. Yeah, fun times here in Benghazi. We get bombed now everyone in D.C. is doing what they can to beef up TRIPOLI." Three exclamation points. "Are you freakin kidding me?" Question mark exclamation point, question mark exclamation point, question mark. "We get bombed and they throw money at Tripoli."

Q Okay, pause there. Can you provide, based on this, can you tell us what was going on, what you meant by throwing money at Tripoli?

A I mean, my email, I don't recall the specifics around the email. I do know at the time Tripoli was kind of working on being set up as an embassy. So, I mean, they had a Special Mission there. They had much more personnel than we did. And they were working to establish their presence. But specifically, as to what this is referencing, I'm sure at the time I knew what I was referencing, but looking back --

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And this Exhibit Number 2 is dated June 8, 2012. So this would have been 2 days after the IED bomb or explosion at the wall of the compound in Benghazi?



A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. So, at that time you -- would it be safe to infer that one thing you were talking about was that you were expressing frustration over not getting any additional resources in Benghazi, either physical security upgrades, or personnel, or any increase?

A Oh, yeah. I mean, I think, you know, just to clarify, one of the things that I would like to infer was, you know, that for me, 2 days ago I had been hit by an IED and that was definitely something that I remember clearly to this day. So, there was a lot of frustration that came out in emails, conversations, and going forward for the next year, or so. Some of that frustration came out in some emails. Some of it came out in conversations. That being said, again, I, you know, you get hit by an IED, you are going to want more security.

Q Uh-huh.

A You know, from what the email says, it looks like we were not getting that. But again, I don't remember any specifics. I can't remember any details, you know.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Okay, Exhibit 3, document number Charlie 05391776. You know, we don't have to go through all of this. Maybe the first sentence, and then that second paragraph there.

A Okay. Yeah, this is a -- [REDACTED] is a very good friend of mine, again. [REDACTED] Just

a really good friend. It was him and the other guy on the email is [REDACTED], another special agent both with the [REDACTED] field office and [REDACTED] at the time was my roommate; both very good friends of mine. And I think we were just going back and forth about events in Benghazi. And so the email I respond is: "You will read about Benghazi again today. A bomb was placed in a car belonging to a local election official; detonated in the middle of a big market this morning. So far no injuries, but still this place is going to shit -- quick."

"Hahahaha -- that is awesome"

Q You can --

A Thank you.

Q And then if you want to go --

A There. Then skipping a couple of sentences, going to the bottom: "Seriously though -- this place is bad. Until yesterday, I had never been nervous about motorcade movements. Now, who knows. Went to the U.K. compound and saw my buddy covered in blood with a massive wound to his shoulder -- 5 days prior I was next to an IED when it went off; yesterday, they bombed the Red Cross in Misrata and today a car bomb in a city market. I wanted EER fodder, but not like this."

Q So can you go ahead and just sort of tell us what we can infer based on your --

A I would say that was a bad week for me. That was a bad week for everybody over in Benghazi. Targeting the British Ambassador was a change in tactics that we hadn't seen. A lot of the targets had been

targeting Western, you know, Libyan on Libyan. And so, one targeting the Ambassador that was pretty -- that was gutsy of the terrorists to do that; something they had not done in the past, at least to our knowledge. And the -- one of the things I was concerned with was the RPG that hit was an armor-piercing RPG. And the fact that, you know, a weapon was used to take out the British Ambassador's motorcade, that could also penetrate our armor. That caused a, you know, prior to that the IED was rough. But seeing that, that's what definitely caused me to think that, hey, this is -- you know, we got armor. We got guns, but they also have weapons that can penetrate our armor. And they are showing that if they are willing to attack the British Ambassador, you know, then they are just as willing to attack us, although we did not know who "they" were. So, and I think it was just the culmination of all of the events. Yeah.

Q I understand. And this goes without saying. I want to be very respectful --

A I appreciate it.

Q -- of these -- I appreciate you talking about these events. So, in no way do we want to minimize what was actually taking place and what you were feeling at the time. And --

A I appreciate that.

Q So --

A EER fodder is EER is Employee Evaluation Review looking for bullets.

Q Sure, I understand. Based, you know, on this, you know,

with these, you know, with these events occurring, how were you communicating. These seem to be like friends outside. Were you communicating these same concerns, you know, or was that something that just happened? You know, were you communicating these same concerns up the channel?

A Oh, I mean, I imagine we were having conversations with the RSOs, but in all honesty, without these emails to remind me, I wouldn't have even recalled these conversations. I mean, there was definitely daily constant conversations regarding the security environment, but the content and context, I do not recall.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Okay. Just two more briefly. Exhibit 4, document number Charlie 05391775, and you don't necessarily have to use that, the word there. So, but I did want to point out here, I'm just pointing out to the witness, this -- just your response, the relationship that you had back and forth, just to point out that you did have. So does that make sense? "Hey, man." But if you want to go ahead and start here and then start here or however you want to do it.

A [REDACTED] was a deputy supervisor at the [REDACTED] field office and I just had a good relationship with him. And with things blowing up, or with the security events taking place in Benghazi, a lot of people were reaching out checking in on me.

Q Sure.

A     So [REDACTED] reached out. In his email he said: "Hey, man, I have been paying attention to what's going on there. Sounds like a laugh a minute. Trust no one and keep your head down. It's hard to tell who is who in those situations. If you need anything here let me know."

And then my response to that was: "Thanks for helping out. Yeah, things here are pretty messed up over here. IED at the Embassy compound. RPG attack on the U.K. guy, and two more explosions today -- this place is getting worse."

Q     Okay. I think the document speaks for itself, or would you like to elaborate?

A     No, it was, yeah, you know, I, mean that's my email. That's what I said, and things were clearly getting worse.

Q     But I think just for the record, I think the document also shows the camaraderie and the compassion that you had with your colleagues there and how they were looking out for you and I think that is important.

A     Yeah, and also just to highlight. These are all, you know, informal channels. These are just friends checking in on me.

Q     Right.

A     You know, I just want to just reiterate that.

Q     Yeah, but I think that -- you know, for the record, I want to point out that, you know, there are people that were concerned about you. You are talking offline after things are going, so fair enough.

A     No, I appreciate that.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 5

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Okay, last exhibit, Exhibit 5, document number Charlie 05391784. This, I just need a little -- if you can just -- yeah, you can talk through it just like you did the other one.

A The email is from [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] was a supervisor at the [REDACTED] field office at the time I was assigned to the [REDACTED] field office. We were looking at staffing patterns for an upcoming event. It was going to be taking place in [REDACTED] at the time. And he reached out to me on the side and said: "Okay, I'm sitting now. So what's up with Benghazi? Is the mission RSO not recalling you guys back to Tripoli? At least are they giving you more bodies...even though it is a house really."

My response to him was: "Hahaha....too much to say over email. I will give you a call. But regardless of the attacks, we need to 'normalize' things here, as we have been told."

Q Can you explain or elaborate?

A You know, normalize, I don't recall the context of that. You know, it's a phrase that, you know, when in general, separate from the Benghazi incident is, normalize is, you know, making a solid approach. You know, you transition to a more standard post instead of a more tactical -- tac environment, but the context here for Benghazi --

Q Let me just clarify because that's my question. I didn't

know.

A Yeah.

Q And you stated, you know, you are transitioning more from a tactical, you know, position, or optics, to more of a what, sustainable, or -- I just want to make sure.

A Separate from Benghazi --

Q Sure.

A -- like, you know other posts, they are at country X. There is a coup over there. You only had to beef up the security presence.

Q Correct.

A Once thing stabilize in that country, we are not going to keep lots of, you know, armed individuals highly visible and stuff over at a post.

Q Correct.

A So we normalize, we try to reduce our security footprint, or reduce the posture, or change it up, to give the appearance of a more normal post, a normal working environment. As for relating to Benghazi --

Q Fair enough. Fair enough. I'm not trying to infer --

A -- I don't recall the context for that.

Q But I mean, based on your email, we need -- you know, someone had communicated to you based on your email, the goal was to normalize. Would that be accurate?

A Yes, sir, that's accurate.

Q And then your email, the date of is email is June 20,

correct?

A Yes, sir.

Q And the date of the attack on the wall was June 6, and then the British, was this after the British?

A Yes, sir, the attack on the British was June 11.

Q So we had two security incidents that happened, and after those two security incidents, was it still your understanding that the communication to you from, you know, since you said there is nobody below you, somebody was communicating, we still want to normalize. Is that your understanding?

A Yeah, I can read the email here, but I can't recall with any kind of ability to say who was saying that. It was, you know -- the email seems to infer that.

Q Okay.

A But beyond what is said in the email, I don't --

Q But you know, in or around June 20, was there any significant, you know, was there still a transition to normalize, or was it going back to more sort of a tactical posture. After those was it more of, hey, we are going to go back to -- was it your understanding we are going to move more June, July we are going to move more tactical, or continue more towards sort of a normalize? What was your impression while you were there after those two events?

A You know, I mean, the security environment was not improving. So, I don't know where I heard or was told normalize.

Q Fair enough. So let's take normalize off the table and we



are wrapping up here. So, after those two events, did you, you know, based on your experience, because you would have been there after this, June 20, for at least another month-and-a-half?

A Yes, sir.

Q Did you have a sense that the posture was moving more toward, okay, we are going to have more of a tactical post? They are sending in more people? They are sending in more funds. We are going to become more, you know, stronger and aggressive, or did you still feel like the position was to continue to move toward normalizing, your opinion?

A My, you know, I mean, I will say there was -- there were discussions over sandbags, and one of the comments came up was, we don't want the bunker look.

Q Okay.

A So --

Q And what does that mean? What was your understanding?

A My understanding of that was, you know, we don't want -- we don't want people to come to the compound and see a bunch of sandbags, and a bunch of bunkers. That was my understanding, but yeah.

Q And would that, a bunker look be more of a tactical look or more of a normalized look?

A It would be more of a tactical look in my opinion.

Q All right, fair enough. Let me pause for 2 minutes and see if there is any other questions. And then I'm going to wrap. Go ahead?

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Do you recall who said, we don't want the bunker look? Was

that the principal officer, or did it come out of Tripoli, or D.C.?

A That's a fantastic question. There is some email traffic on it, but I'm not sure. You know, I mean, I know the information was relayed to me at one point. Where that information came from, you know --

Q Did you review that email traffic before you came here today for your --

A I mean, I think I saw it in an email that we reviewed, but I also remember that --

Q Independently?

A Yeah, that was something that stood out for me.

Q Okay. Did you -- I would assume, but correct me if I'm wrong -- that you disagreed with that assessment that you thought more sandbags were needed?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay.

Mr. Grider. Three more questions.

Ms. Jackson. Wait. Wait.

Mr. Westmoreland. I just want to ask, when you say normalize, did they give you any hint on how to normalize a relationship other than just not having the appearance of sandbags, or tactical facilities, or anything?

Mr. Evers. I think he said he didn't remember the context of the word in Benghazi.

Mr. Westmoreland. Pardon?

Mr. Evers. I think he said he said he didn't remember the context of the word normalize in Benghazi.

Mr. [REDACTED] I mean, if it wasn't for the email, I wouldn't have, you know, I have heard that phrase used in referencing other posts throughout the world, but how I heard that, or what was told to me on that, I apologize, sir, but I just don't remember the context.

Mr. Westmoreland. But it would seem to be normalize as what another embassy may have with their host country, or whatever, to me. I mean, I don't know. I'm not trying to put words into your mouth, but that's good.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q Okay. Just three quick questions.

A Yes, sir.

Q BMG, the Blue Mountain Group --

A Yes, sir.

Q -- was that contract, were you ever privy to the basis of that contract, or what was going on?

A Yes.

Q You are?

A Yes, sir.

Q Can you tell us a little bit what you know about that?

A That contract was a -- it was a U.K. firm, but they had a Libyan partner.

Q Okay.

A What that arrangement was, I don't know. I know

some -- separate from Benghazi, in some countries, to have a business there, members of that country, citizens of that country have to have a certain shareholder or own a certain percentage of the company for the company to operate.

Q Was there ever a time that that contract sort of dissolved, to your knowledge, or was that intact while you were there, or --

A There were some issues with Blue Mountain Group in Tripoli. There appeared to be some business dealings with the Libyan business partner and the British business partner that disagreed upon.

Q You disagreed?

A No, no, sir, the Libyan and the British, as I understood it.

Q And who would have handled, you know, the contracting of BMG?

A That would have been an office within Diplomatic Security. I believe it is Overseas Protective Operations, I believe. But there is an office that handles that contractor.

Q [REDACTED], would [REDACTED] be in that chain or not?

A [REDACTED] would have had visibility, but that would not have been -- he would have been the advocate for the RSO and to make sure that contract is working smoothly and effecting.

Q Okay.

A There was a member from the British that came out and talked with us, and it got resolved. Whatever the Libyan business partners tried to do, our guidance from Diplomatic Security, in which we agreed

with and concurred with, was to keep the guards you have. Keep working with the British counterparts. You know, do not let the Libyan counterparts come out and try and take over or add their guards.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q So, I just wanted to go to what was the nature of the issues. The Libyan counterpart wanted to swap out the people that you had been working with other people?

A As was told to me, so I don't know this to be factual or not, but as was told to me, was from the British, was that the Libyans were not diligent with their funds, or were taking some money for themselves.

Q So, they weren't paying the guards what they were supposed to be paying them?

A The Libyan partner was taking money from the British partner, as was told to me.

Q Okay.

A I do not know that for a fact. But that's what was told to me, and that's what caused the split. And then the Libyan business partner tried to say, well, we are in Libya. I'm going to be in charge of this. At one point they actually tried to send out a program manager to Benghazi, a U.S. citizen, actually, to take over for the current program manager who is a British citizen. We worked with Diplomatic Security headquarters, and they said, no, you keep working with your current counterparts. Whoever is coming out there, they are not welcome. And so we did.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q So this issue was taking place during the time that you were there?

A Yes, sir.

Q And you were aware of it?

A Yes, sir, lots of emails back and forth on that.

Q Okay. Did that issue ever concern you with respect to a security issue, or was that more --

A Yes, sir.

Q -- administrative in your mind?

A That was purely administrative. That was somebody over in Libya -- over in Tripoli trying to get involved in something they shouldn't.

Q Last question. Evacuation plans. Did you all have those?

A I don't know if I ever saw a formal document. I knew our plan was pretty much drive to the border. You know, get in vehicles and drive. There wasn't, you know, all of our vehicles were -- we tried to keep them at three-quarters of a tank or above. We had medical supplies in there. We had food. We had water in there. And that's the way we -- that was essentially our evacuation plan. Because if things went bad enough to where we had evacuate, you know, I don't know if we wanted to rely on the airport at that time.

Mr. Westmoreland. Was there any extraction plans?

Mr. [REDACTED] Not during my time, sir. Not during my time.

BY MR. GRIDER:

Q And one followup. It is not a question. It is a followup. You had communicated earlier that you felt that your position was on the bottom of the totem pole. If orders or directions would have been given out from the State Department, in D.C., would they have come to you? Would you have heard them?

A Any communication would have come from the State Department, would have -- I mean, if it is going to be formal communication, it is going to be a cable. Otherwise, if there is something that, you know, DS wants, or some issues DS wants to address, it is going to be an email from the desk officer to the RSO in Benghazi, or the RSO in Tripoli.

Q So, would you have gotten, you know, or would that be sort of filtered?

A No, sir. That would have been -- there were times when [REDACTED] called out there, and you asked him, like, hey, [REDACTED], can you put the other guy on the phone? And then they would talk about issues at that level.

Mr. Grider. Any other questions?

Ms. Jackson. We are good.

Mr. Grider. All right. I want to say thank you. We are going to continue on, on a classified setting. My colleagues more than likely will take over. I just want to say I really appreciate your time, questions, and I think we all respect the work that you have done in the service for our country. And so I really do appreciate that.

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you, sir. I appreciate that.

Ms. Jackson. We will go off the record.

[Recess.]

Ms. Sawyer. We'll go back on the record. It's 1:30, and we will begin with our second round.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q I wanted to revisit for a few minutes, at least, some of the emails that we talked about in the last hour.

A Okay.

Q The hour before that, I had asked you if some of the incidents that occurred had, you know, shaken you up, in essence, and you had acknowledged that they had. And you had indicated that you had reached out to some folks who were both DS colleagues but people you considered friends.

A Yes.

Q And exchanged -- you specifically mentioned you exchanged in some email exchanges with some of those folks.

During the last hour, we were looking at Exhibits 1 through 5. Would you characterize -- take a look at those again. These Exhibits 1 through 5, would they fall into that category of emails that you were talking about during my first round of questioning with you?

A Can you clarify the category?

Q Sure. Exchanges that you were having with DS colleagues who you considered to be friends. I think you characterized them, and I don't want to mischaracterize you, as personal in nature. Personal enough that it would have been something you would have, though these



were sent on the official email, could just as easily have been sent from a personal email account?

A I would say most of these were personal. Some of these exhibits did have just like some basic logistics, travel logistics in them, as well as one of the emails had, as I review it, had information related to criminal cases at my office. But other than that, I mean, they were all personal, personal in nature some to friends.

Q And you had kind of described without the particulars in front of you, to me, that sometimes you used what you described as colorful language. And taking a look at Exhibit 1 and you actually did during that first hour with me, give us one example of the word "boom."

So, Exhibit 1, what you had read into the record before says: "Shit went boom. Bomb blew a hole in the front wall next to the office around 3:00 a.m." Is that to you an example of what you were explaining when you said you used colorful language?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And that was the actual day of the attack. That was just fairly shortly after the attack?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And you had indicated that part of what you felt these emails reflected was a little bit from your perspective, kind of some self-knowledge, some, I think, I will use the term "fried." I don't know, some self-knowledge about how you felt you had reacted in the situation.

Was that part of this dynamic? Did you feel --

A Well, you know, I mean, that was definitely part of it. Whether that influence one email over the other, I would say, while I was proud of the way I handled myself, proud of the way I responded. You know, these emails also picked up on the tone of, you know, somebody had been hit by an IED, and then saw his buddy hit by an RPG 5 days later. You know, so, some of that experiences, the emotion from all of that is, you know, picked up in these emails.

Q Right. So yeah, I mean, you commented on the timing. That's true. Exhibit 1 is June 6, the very day that the IED hit the mission compound itself.

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Exhibit 2, is June 8, which is 2 days after that IED attack. Is that the case?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And then Exhibit 3, is June 13, which is only 5 days later, and as you noted, there was an intervening incident, the attack on the U.K. Ambassador's convoy?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q So, that's also in that relative timeframe, and then two of those emails Exhibit 4, is also on June 13.

And then the last of these exhibits is dated June 20. And I will just have you take a look at that exhibit on June 20.

A Yes, ma'am.

Q So, in [REDACTED] email to you, which is, I'm just going

to direct you to the second email down. He mentions -- he asks you a question. "Is the mission RSO not recalling you guys back to Tripoli?"

And then he says: "At least are they giving you more bodies...even though it is a house really. What was your understanding of what he meant by even though it is a house, really?"

A The compound was two villas that were rented out that the State Department was leasing from private owners and it was their houses that we were working out of, their property.

Q And did you have any sense that he was expressing that, given the setup of the compound as a house, that there might be a perception that the number of -- the security footprint was sufficient for that type of a setup?

A I'm not sure what he was implying or trying to -- trying, you know, I don't -- it's 2.5 years ago. I don't recall.

Q Fair enough. The first part of that is, "the mission RSO not recalling you guys back to Tripoli?"

A Correct.

Q So this is June 20. Were you aware whether or not there was a conversation going on about reassessing the presence in Benghazi at that time?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you know whether [REDACTED] who had just departed, was possibly involved in a conversation about reassessing the presence in Benghazi?

A No, ma'am.

Q So, if that conversation occurred, you would not have known about it?

A Correct.

Q And you had indicated a little earlier that you felt -- she was the Principal Officer who had just departed?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Do you recall whether there was a pause between her being there as the Principal Officer, and the next Principal Officer who came in?

A Yes, ma'am, there was.

Q And the next Principal Officer that came in was Mr. [REDACTED]

A Yes, ma'am, that's correct.

Q And do you recall approximately how long that pause lasted?

A Best guess would be a week, or I really don't -- I know we had a TDY Principal Officer [REDACTED], I believe was her name, came over from Tripoli and covered, but how long she was there, I don't -- it was a long enough timeframe for them to send a body from Tripoli.

Q Earlier you had said the principal officers, at least I assume the ones you had experienced with, you felt were strong advocates on behalf of the needs of Benghazi. Was that true of Ms. [REDACTED]?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Do you have any reason to believe that if she had been asked

for her opinion on reassessing the presence in Benghazi, she would have been anything less than a strong advocate as to her position on it?

A No, ma'am, not at all. She was very well informed. As to, you know --

Q So, I'm going to ask you, I think we talked briefly, kind of this email is the last Exhibit 5, is toward the end of June. Do you recall and I think we talked briefly about this, that there were elections in Libya in kind of the early part of July? I think July 7 was the election date.

A Yes, ma'am.

Q And do you recall whether there were concerns about security incidents leading into those elections?

A Yes, ma'am, there were.

Q And some of the things that we talked about in terms of there weren't -- you didn't talk about specific instances of assassination attempts, or -- but was your sense that some of those were related to the upcoming elections?

A You know, at the time we did reference it as election-related violence, or violence in the run up to the elections. Whether they were actually related to the elections or not, I can't say. I just remember -- I just remember a couple of occasions talking about the violence. We did phrase it as election-related violence.

Q And did -- to the extent you can recall, did you guys take any particular security steps in the run up to the election to change the posture to address any particular concerns?

A You know, I would not say that it was related to the elections. I mean, there was limited changes we could make to our posture out there. But what we did, you know, as a mission leader changing our outs, try to have meetings on the compound, stuff like that. That is kind of what -- that was pretty much what we were limited to in the changes we could make.

Q And do you recall any incidents around the election that caused concerns for the mission in Benghazi?

A I do not recall any specific instances. I mean, I knew there was -- I remember there being, you know, explosions or getting reports of security incidents, but I do not recall a specific one.

Q Any incidents after that election date so kind of after the July 7 -- and remind me what day you left.

A I left July 29 or 30, give or take a couple of days on either side. No -- afterwards, you know, there was a little bit of a lull in some of the security incidences immediately after the elections.

Q So I'm going to show you what we are going to mark as Exhibit 6 for identification purposes.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 6

Was marked for identification.]

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q I'm going to give you a minute to take a look at that, and you know, it's three pages long. So the email exchange, starts, you know, obviously at the bottom and goes upward from there.

A Okay.

Q So Exhibit 6 just for identification purposes, bears the Bates Number C05391743. It's a three-page long -- three pages, and it is, from what I can tell, an email exchange between you, Mr. [REDACTED], and [REDACTED].

A Yes, ma'am, that is correct.

Q And who is Mr. [REDACTED]?

A [REDACTED] is a DS special agent, and he was scheduled to arrive in Benghazi after my departure.

Q And I just wanted to start with the second message. There is an initial email where Mr. [REDACTED] reaches out to you, I think on July 15, 2012. And then your response, he is asking you some basic questions trying to familiarize himself with what he might need when he arrives in Benghazi. And then you respond in that second email on July 16, 2012. And I just want to read that first sentence.

You say: "No bother at all. Thanks for reaching out. It has been a crazy ass TDY... from a nice slow pace to shit blowing up and now back to relative calm."

So, in terms of your familiarizing him with kind of your experience, did that accurately reflect kind of how you felt about it, that there had been a flurry of activity, and I think, you know, kind of as you indicated things blowing up, and that things were back to relative calm by the time you sent this email which was July 16, 2012?

A Immediately after the elections, there was definitely a lull in activity, you know. I think we were expecting to have a little more violence or some kind of more disturbances over there, and we did

not -- did not see that. So, at the time of this email, yes, ma'am.

Q And did that change again before you left at the end of July?

A I think right as I started to end, we started seeing an uptick again.

Q And do you know in particular any incidents and how they were managed?

A The best I recall was just general security incidences, again, IEDs, stuff like that, targeted assassinations, stuff like that.

Q And much earlier in today's discussion, you had indicated that your sense from talking to the other TDY agents even before you went to Benghazi, one of the ways you described it was that it was an environment that was in flux.

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Was that consistent with your experience there, that it was in flux, that at times there appears, certainly in early June, through June, to have been some -- I think you called them significant incidents, and then that fluctuated during your time there?

A I think towards in -- towards the end of July there was definitely a lull after the elections. You know, I definitely, you know, one thing that it is safe to say that day to day it is a relative call. You know, I mean, it is relative. We are in Benghazi. We are in Eastern Libya. And relative to early to mid-June, things are a little quieter right now.

Q All right. So, you are not trying to pretend that it is not a dangerous environment?



A No, not at all. No, it is clearly a --

Q Do you think that everyone understood it was a dangerous environment?

A Clarify everyone.

Q Well, your team on the ground, and certainly the people who preceded you that you spoke with.

A Everybody I worked with in Benghazi, to the best of my recollection, always had a solid understanding of the security environment on the ground.

Q Now, you had indicated when we spoke to you during our first round that you were not -- that you had not participated in any Emergency Action Committees during your time in Benghazi, is that correct?

A I do not remember one.

Q Do you know -- I'm going to use the shorthand, EAC -- do you remember what the purpose of an EAC is?

A Yes, ma'am. EAC is generally when a embassy country team comes together to discuss some kind of upcoming event in response to a security situation or in response to an emergency. And it is basically all the heads of the organizations, the offices within the embassy come together under the ambassador and the Deputy Chief of Mission and talk about, hey, here is the situation. Here is the environment. How should we react? And each office will provide their input. That will get drafted into a cable sent back to headquarters.

Q So, during the last hour you described the IED attack as

a significant event. You weren't sure whether it, in particular, caused a tripwire. Do you know whether or not there was a formal or informal EAC in either Benghazi or Tripoli --

A No.

Q -- in the aftermath of that?

A No, I do not know.

Q Is it possible that there was one?

A Again, you know, I can't speculate on the possibility, but it would have been difficult for there to be one in Benghazi and for me not to know about it.

Q Is it possible there was one in Tripoli?

A Very, very possible.

Q And if there wasn't one in Tripoli, is it possible that that could have occurred with input from Benghazi?

A Yeah, I mean, if there was in Tripoli, I mean, I would hope there would be input from Benghazi. But, again, not having visibility on it --

Q And what about after the attack on the convoy of the British Ambassador? Were you aware of a formal or informal EAC in either Benghazi or Tripoli?

A Again, I remember [REDACTED], the Principal Officer, sending back a detailed email of what happened, because I debriefed some people, provided her the information that she talking in the email. But other than that, what steps were taken afterwards.

Q And who at your post would have been responsible in

your -- from your recollection, for participating in any formal or informal EACs? Who in Benghazi?

A In Benghazi, the Principal Officer, the RSO, information management officer.

Q So in June that would have been Ms. [REDACTED], Mr. [REDACTED], and then I'm not sure who --

A [REDACTED]

Q [REDACTED], okay. Did you have any responsibility for either -- with regard to tripwires you said -- I think you made this clear before, but just to make sure I understand it -- would you have had responsibility for either kind of setting or assessing tripwires during your time in Benghazi?

A I was not involved in tripwires, so -- and even there, I can't say that they would be set and determined in Benghazi. Tripwires are generally a country-wide policy, and therefore, the Embassy, it has been my experience, would be the ones who are going to set those policies.

Q So certainly Tripoli would have been involved in kind of establishing of these tripwires from your sense of how it would have operated?

A My understanding of it, if there were tripwires, Tripoli would have been involved in setting those up.

Q Okay. Do you know what if any involvement main State would have had in establishing tripwires for Libya?

A No, ma'am. I mean, tripwires, I believe it takes the whole

country team which includes, you know, the political officers, Econ officers, all of those officers that all report back to their chain of command. But as far as the actual process of setting up the tripwires, I don't know.

Q So, shortly after the attacks, an independent Accountability Review Board was established to investigate the attacks. Are you aware of the fact that an ARB was stood up to investigate the attacks?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Have you had an opportunity to -- the report that they issued, they conducted an investigation in, I think, about 2 months and issued a report in December 2012. Have you had an opportunity ever to read at least the unclassified version of that report?

A I skimmed some of the highlights.

Q Do you recall enough about it to know whether or not you felt it accurately reflected your experience in Benghazi?

A My general impressions with ARB was reading it there was some stuff I liked about it. There was some stuff that I probably didn't agree with it. But again, I just -- I didn't even read the full -- full report, so --

Q Do you recall any of the particulars of what you liked about it?

A No, ma'am.

Q What about the things that you thought -- that you didn't like about it?

A Again, just with the connection to Benghazi, a lot of any time I see news media or reporting about it, I just kind of tune it out in general. Just because having been on the ground and knowing what went on, seeing other folks report about it and talk about it, I, you know, try to avoid some of that. So as far as the ARB, there is not much that --

Q So, yeah, talk to me a little bit about why you tried to avoid that. Is that --

A Just, you know, personal connection to it. You know, and there is a lot of misunderstood information out there. So --

Q So, one of the things that it sounds like, you know, you certainly have said that, of course, from a security perspective, you know, someone is going to always want additional resources. But one of the things that the ARB was pretty clear about was that they did feel that both in terms of staffing that there had been a struggle and that Benghazi had not been sufficiently staffed to what had been recommended. And they made some recommendations to address those staffing problems.

One of those recommendations actually had already been forwarded by the State Department before the ARB even issued a recommendation. And that was, increase DS personnel for high- and critical-threat posts, and for additional mobile security deployment teams as well as an increase in DS domestic staffing here in the U.S. in support of such actions.

A Uh-huh.

Q Do you agree with that recommendation? Do you think it is a useful recommendation to help correct some of the issues that you struggled with?

A You know, I mean, it's a -- I'm glad more folks are focusing on high-threat posts. I believe high-threat posts create some unique issues. And so people hired and trained to address those unique issues is better for the organization. But I'm not really involved with those bureaus or that -- and again, not having done an overseas tour --

Q Since Benghazi, is that what you are saying?

A You know, truthfully, for me, Benghazi was a TDY. I had never been permanently assigned in the Foreign Service overseas and so there's certain things about Foreign Service that I still have yet to experience and traditional overseas environments is one of them. So commenting back on international programs or high-threat posts or these new posts that are created, you know.

Q Well, one of the other recommendations did have to do with the TDY assignments.

A Uh-huh.

Q And the ARB did find that there was a recommendation that key policy program and security personnel should be assigned for a minimum of 1 year. And that for temporary duty, it should be a minimum of 120 days.

A All right. Sounds familiar.

Q Yeah, do you think that that -- I mean, do you agree with that recommendation? Do you think that's useful to help extend the

institutional knowledge? At one point during the day you did talk about the fact that the TDY assignment was relatively short-term in nature.

A Yeah, I think having people on the ground, again, that's from my limited experience, but I mean, I think it would be beneficial to have you on the ground for longer.

Q Are there any other recommendations that you think in terms of, I mean, we are the eighth congressional investigation, and we are trying to figure out really if there is more that we can, in a forward-looking way, help. Do you have some additional recommendations based on your experience that would be helpful looking forward?

A One of the things I liked about the ARB was they lengthened our training program, the high-threat training. I thought that was fantastic. But other than that, what's in the ARB seems pretty exhaustive, but again, that is only from me skimming through it, so --

BY MS. ROBINSON:

Q Shifting gears a little bit, I would like to ask you a series of questions about a number of public allegations related to the attacks. We understand that the committee is investigating these allegations, and therefore, we have to ask everyone about them. But I would not want you to think that by asking these questions that neither I nor the minority members are saying that any of these allegations have merit.

You will also see that there are a lot of these allegations, so

this takes a little while. And I apologize in advance and ask you to please just bear with me. For the most part, I will just ask whether or not you have any evidence or information to support each of the allegations and if you do not, we can move on to the next one.

It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down. And this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to stand down on the night of the attacks?

A No.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post fact checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinocchios. That is the highest award for false claims. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instructions on day-to-day



security resources in Benghazi?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring 2011. Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that the CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria and that they found no support for this allegation.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A No, ma'am.

Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special Mission compound and

there have been a number of allegations about the cause and the appropriateness of that delay. The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report concluding that the team was not ordered to stand down, but that instead, there were tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart. Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no standdown order to CIA personnel?

A No, ma'am.

Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or improper reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA security personnel who the Annex to assist the Special Mission compound?

A No, ma'am.

Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board, damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production.

Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A No, ma'am.

Q Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi attacks for political reasons and that he then misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship. Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you have any evidence that the CIA Deputy Director Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for political reasons?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made an intentional misrepresentation when she spoke on the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks. Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday talk shows?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that the President of the United States

was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief on the night of the attacks and that he was missing in action. Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that the President was virtually AOL as Commander in Chief or missing in action on the night of the attacks?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead, ordered to remain in place in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that there was no standdown order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi. Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no standdown order issued to the U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A No, ma'am.

Q It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee conducted a review of the attacks after which he stated, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have

done more than we could."

Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A No, ma'am.

Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A No, ma'am.

Q Thank you very much.

Ms. Jackson. Austin, was that the quickest?

Mr. Evers. That was, actually, by quite a bit.

Ms. Sawyer. So I think we can go off the record now to reconvene in the classified setting.

[Whereupon, at 2:02 p.m., the interview proceeded in classified session.]

1           Ms. Jackson. Ready?

2           We are going to go back onto the record. We have  
3           relocated to HVC-302, to be in a classified setting for the  
4           final, which we hope will be short sessions for you Agent  
5           [REDACTED].

6           I did have a few followup questions that -- based on  
7           questions or answers you had given before when you indicated  
8           that you might want to discuss something more fully in a  
9           classified setting.

10          It is my understanding that everyone in here is cleared  
11          the TS/SCI level -- TS only. However, I don't anticipate  
12          that any answer would be above the secret level. Based on  
13          what we have discussed before where you have reserved  
14          answering, do you believe anything will be above the secret  
15          level?

16          Mr. [REDACTED]. No, ma'am.

17          Ms. Jackson. Okay. We do that for classification  
18          purposes of the initial transcript that will go out for a  
19          classification review.

20          If at any time, you think one of your answers would go  
21          above the secret level, if you could flag it for us, we would  
22          appreciate it. It is not absolutely necessary, but again, I  
23          think that we will be no higher than the secret level. Okay.

24          Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay.

25          Ms. Jackson. And do we have the exhibits here? Okay.

## EXAMINATION

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q And, in our very first session today, we talked about information that was available to you prior to going into Benghazi, and then once you were there. Did you review any classified reporting prior to going to Benghazi?

A Prior to going to Benghazi, I did not review any classified reporting.

Q Okay. Once you were there, did you have access to classified reporting?

A Yes, ma'am, I had access up to a secret level, cable traffic and emails.

Q And who produced those cables and emails? Was it State Department information, foreign government, other U.S. Government agencies? Who was the author?

A My primary POC was the Diplomatic Security's Threat Investigations and Analysis Directorate, Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis, IDS-ITA. It is basically the DS's internal intel shop and they were the ones that were monitoring cable traffic on a regular basis. And they would send me "you should reads." They would send me secret tear lines or communicate with them on -- that was the primary person that was sending me threat traffic and cable traffic.

Q And how often would that be available? Would it be daily? Would it be a weekly report? Would it be less often

1       than that?

2           A     The laptop was in the TOC and it was made available  
3       to us every day. And it was really just based on the threat  
4       reporting what cable traffic was getting produced. So, it  
5       was not as much a daily situation report as in, hey, you  
6       know, CIA, or NSA, or whatever, just published this report.  
7       Here is a secret tear line. If you want additional  
8       information, [REDACTED]

9           Q     Okay, [REDACTED] but  
10      when you first arrived in Benghazi and started reviewing the  
11      classified information, was there any new information  
12      provided to you as to the nature of the threats in Libya?

13          A     I mean, there was cable traffic constantly being  
14      produced on Libya, and people all across the Intelligence  
15      Community were producing it, and so cables that reference  
16      Benghazi, or had terrorism issues related to Benghazi would  
17      be flagged and sent forward to us, and we would read those as  
18      they came up. So --

19          Q     Did the nature of the threat, the nature of the  
20      risk to you and others at the Special Mission compound or  
21      other Western entities change during the time that you were  
22      in Benghazi? Did it shift in any way?

23          A     I can't say there was a change or a shift.  
24      Mostly it was case-by-case. As a specific threat arose, we  
25      would be notified of it and then we would act accordingly.



1           Q     Okay. You talked about a couple of security  
2 incidents earlier in the day, and one of those, as I  
3 understand it, was one you did not personally witness, but  
4 you were informed that there had been an Islamic rally where  
5 black flags were being shown, and armor, or weaponized  
6 vehicles were used.

7           Did you receive any reporting regarding who was  
8 responsible for that rally, or who was involved in that  
9 rally?

10          A     The only specifics I remember of that incident is  
11 just being told by either the principal officer, the RSO that  
12 the rally had taken place.

13          Q     Okay. You don't recall reading any classified  
14 reporting regarding --

15          A     I can't say that there was or that there wasn't. I  
16 just don't remember it.

17          Q     Okay. You also, when we were asking you questions  
18 earlier about the attack on the British Ambassador, you, I  
19 believe you said you had been notified by the Tripoli RSO  
20 that the attack had occurred. Is that correct?

21          A     Yes, ma'am.

22          Q     Okay. You weren't notified by someone in Benghazi?

23          A     No, ma'am.

24          Q     Even though the attack occurred in Benghazi?

25          A     Yes, ma'am.

1 Q How did the Tripoli RSO get notification prior to  
2 anyone else in Benghazi?

3 A They were notified by the British Embassy in  
4 Tripoli.

5 Q Okay, and you said at that time that there was  
6 something that you could discuss more fully in a classified  
7 setting. What was that piece of information?

8 A At the time of the attack, I got notified over the  
9 phone [REDACTED] that the British Ambassador's  
10 motorcade was attacked. I get off the phone and I call [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED]

12 Q Okay.

13 A And, I inform [REDACTED] that, hey, the British  
14 Ambassador's motorcade has been attacked. There are  
15 injuries. [REDACTED]

16 Q Okay. And did that occur?

17 A Yes, ma'am.

18 Q [REDACTED]  
19 [REDACTED]

20 A Yes, ma'am, that's correct.

21 Q [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED]

23 A [REDACTED]

24 Q [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED]

1           A     We notified them of the attack on our compound, but  
2     no, I mean we passed information and we worked with them on a  
3     daily basis. But specific requests for assistance, no. We  
4     would notify them that, hey, we are moving here, going here,  
5     just for your awareness. And there were times they would do  
6     the same to us. They would say, hey, we have a late-night  
7     move. Will you guys cover us if we need some help? And we  
8     said yes.

9           Q     Okay, and what do you mean by will you cover us?  
10    Were you physically going along with them?

11          A     No, I was not. I was not. If they needed help,  
12    they would call us and we would put on our kit, grab our QRF  
13    guys and go respond and help them out.

14          Q     So there was an informal understanding that you  
15    would come to each other's aid or rescue if needed?

16          A     Yes, ma'am.

17          Q     Okay. Now, on the June 6 IED attack against the  
18    wall of your compound, do you recall whether you or anyone  
19    else [REDACTED]

20    [REDACTED]?

21          A     [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

22    [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

23    [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

24    [REDACTED]

25          Q     [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1           A    No, ma'am. That was not part of our accepted  
2 practices at the time.

3           Q    You would --

4           Mr. [REDACTED] You missed all of the good stuff,  
5 Congressman.

6           Mr. Westmoreland. Story of my life.

7           BY MS. JACKSON:

8           Q    Regarding the IED attack that occurred on June 6,  
9 did [REDACTED] provide you or the other agents any information  
10 or intelligence regarding that attack?

11          A    No, ma'am. Afterward they had some suspicions or  
12 some thoughts on who was it -- who might have been involved,  
13 but there was never -- I do not believe there was a produced  
14 intelligence --

15          Q    Okay.

16          A    -- on the attack.

17          Q    Okay. Did you and the other agents have any  
18 suspicions as to who was responsible for that attack?

19          A    Yes, ma'am. We had our thoughts.

20          Q    And what were they?

21          A    A group, the Abdel-Rahman Brigade. It is reference  
22 to The Blind Sheikh. It was a group taking credit, but we  
23 did not know if that was a cohesive group or if that was just  
24 one person taking credit, and -- but that was really the only  
25 indications we had.

1           Q     What about the attack 5 days later on the UK  
2 Ambassador; did you ever receive any intelligence as to who  
3 was responsible for that attack?

4           A     I do not recall. I can't say that I didn't, but  
5 no, ma'am. I don't think so.

6           Q     Okay. All right. If you could, could you pull out  
7 Exhibit 2 in front of you. And, if you could focus on your  
8 -- at the top of the page of Exhibit 2, your response to your  
9 colleague, and in particular the second paragraph that says,  
10 and I quote, "Oh, before you come out here, make sure you get  
11 a ClassNet account. You will be receiving emails on the high  
12 side." Is that a reference to the fact that you would have  
13 access to classified information from the State Department?

14          A     Yes, ma'am, through the classified computer I  
15 referenced earlier.

16          Q     Did the State Department ever forward an actual CIA  
17 cable or intelligence information from another source?

18          A     ITA would forward me information if the entire  
19 cable was at the secret level, and they could forward it on  
20 that system, they would. Otherwise they would forward me a  
21 secret level tear line.

22          Q     And following that, the next paragraph or line, it  
23 says, and check out this link, and then there is a hyperlink  
24 to an article that appears to be entitled Armed Men Rally for  
25 Islamic Law in Libya. Do you recall that article?

1 A No, ma'am.

2 Q Okay. Do you recall whether this was after  
3 [REDACTED] and one of your colleagues had witnessed the  
4 rally in Benghazi?

5 A I do not believe [REDACTED] witnessed it. I  
6 believe she was informed of it, and that's how we were  
7 informed.

8 Q Okay. Do you recall, though, whether June 8 was  
9 before or after the rally, the date of this email?

10 A That, ma'am, I don't recall the specific  
11 chronology. The email's inferring that it had already taken  
12 place but --

13 Q Okay. Did you become increasingly concerned or  
14 decreasingly concerned about the rise of extremists or  
15 Islamists or terrorists in the Benghazi area during the time  
16 that you were there?

17 A I would say that this gathering, this rally, was  
18 definitely concerning, and I think there was, you know, my  
19 concern was increasing.

20 Q Okay. And did that wane at all during the time  
21 that you were there?

22 A After the elections there was a bit of a lull, as I  
23 mentioned earlier, but, again, everything was relative. A  
24 lull is relative in Benghazi. So --

25 Q And the last area that I wanted to ask you about is

1       when we discussed earlier today, about the weapons that the  
2       QRF members had. I believe you said that they had fully  
3       automatic machine guns available to them and in the house in  
4       which they resided. Is that correct?

5           A     Yes, ma'am.

6           Q     Were there other types of weapons that they brought  
7       to the compound?

8           A     The QRF individuals residing in Benghazi?

9           Q     Yes.

10          A     No, ma'am. I'm just aware of some of the fully  
11       automatic weapons they had inside their house. I would --  
12       no.

13          Q     And how many machine guns were residing in the  
14       house, if you recall?

15          A     Each individual appeared to have their own AK-47,  
16       and then I believe there was one or two fully automatic  
17       machine guns.

18          Q     Were there any rules or policies that would have  
19       prohibited the QRF from mounting fully automatic weapons  
20       around the compound?

21          A     I'm not familiar with any of those rules or  
22       policies.

23          Q     Okay. You just know they weren't?

24          A     Yes, ma'am. That's correct.

25          Ms. Jackson. Congressman Westmoreland.

1           Mr. Westmoreland. I'm on the Intelligence Committee,  
2           and so we handle the CIA; and we were told, that between  
3           April of 2012, and the attack, September of 2012, that there  
4           were approximately 4,000 pieces of intelligence on Libya. Do  
5           you recall ever -- I mean, that's quite a bit of  
6           intelligence. Are you aware, did you ever see any of this  
7           intelligence come through? Were they sending it [REDACTED]  
8           [REDACTED], or do you have any knowledge of this?

9           Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir. We would get cables that we  
10          could read, that were sent over on that classified system.  
11          For example, there was a VBIED threat. They told us, hey, we  
12          have four to six VBIEDs have entered Libya. They crossed  
13          here at this border, and they're possibly in Benghazi, so, we  
14          would receive information along those lines.

15          Mr. Westmoreland. Did that put you all at a heightened  
16          level, all three of you, at the facility?

17          Mr. [REDACTED]. You know, it's something that we took into  
18          consideration, we thought about, but, yes, sir, it definitely  
19          heightened our awareness. Things were already at a fairly  
20          high level, and so I don't know how much a couple pieces of  
21          cable traffic would elevate that. But it's also, there's  
22          lots of intelligence that gets produced all throughout the  
23          world. And unless it's targeting Western interests or  
24          something like that, because there was also a lot of  
25          reporting on Libyan violence. And so, while there's



1 reporting on that, it's not necessarily targeting Western  
2 American interests, so I'm going to see it. I'm going to  
3 take note of it, but unless there's a time or a location,  
4 hey, looking to target this individual or this time, there's  
5 not much action I can take on that intelligence other than  
6 to, you know, be more vigilant.

7 Mr. Westmoreland. Did you have any interaction with [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED]?

9 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

10 Mr. Westmoreland. Socially. I mean --

11 Mr. [REDACTED] Daily, socially. We were passing them  
12 intelligence, in my opinion, probably more than they were  
13 passing to us.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So, you were passing it to  
15 them?

16 Mr. [REDACTED] We had just from our local Guard Force, we  
17 had all the sources on the ground. From our QRF guys, we had  
18 information coming in from them, from their militias. And  
19 so, we were collecting a lot of information that way. Any  
20 time there would be an explosion that we would hear, we would  
21 reach out to them to try to get additional information. We  
22 were in communication daily and for the most part seeing each  
23 other daily.

24 Mr. Westmoreland. Did you ever talk to them about the  
25 security at the compound?

1           Mr. [REDACTED] I can't say the conversation never came up,  
2 but I don't recall.

3           Mr. Westmoreland. Do you remember if they ever gave you  
4 any input about some of the surroundings or anything that --

5           Mr. [REDACTED] I mean, we were regularly discussing  
6 security incidences and events that were taking place. You  
7 know, we would come up from a meeting or we would get a  
8 report from our police contacts, and we would instantly  
9 contact them and chase it down with them and find out, hey, I  
10 have heard this. What have you heard? Okay. What was the  
11 Lat-Long on that. No, I got this incident over here.

12           Mr. Westmoreland. But specifically, did they ever  
13 comment on your security there at the compound?

14           Mr. [REDACTED] They may have made observations but nothing  
15 that I, you know, nothing that I remember. I mean, there was  
16 three of us there so -- three to five of us, so any  
17 recommendations they would have made would have been -- we  
18 would have listened to them definitely.

19           Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

20           BY MS. JACKSON:

21           Q Did they make any recommendations on how,  
22 additional or different ways that you could increase your  
23 security posture at the compound?

24           A No, ma'am, not to my recollection. Like I said,  
25 they had their work they were focused on, and any

1 recommendations they may have made, well you know, was  
2 something that you know, I appreciate the recommendation, but  
3 we have already heard that. We all know that so -- you're  
4 telling us something we already know.

5 Mr. Westmoreland. Did they ever participate in any of  
6 your drills, as far as an attack or different scenarios, that  
7 might either happen [REDACTED] at the compound?

8 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, sir.

9 Mr. Westmoreland. Did you all ever discuss that?

10 Mr. [REDACTED]. We did discuss it. We never practiced  
11 drills. I just think we didn't want to bring a lot of  
12 attention to their base, and practicing drills with them  
13 would have brought additional attention to them.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. Sure.

15 Mr. [REDACTED]. But, we did discuss it. If there was a  
16 security incident, the initial response was the February 17th  
17 Martyrs Brigade, [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED] Because the Martyrs th Brigade in  
19 general did not have uniforms, [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] so we were concerned if they're [REDACTED]  
21 responding to a security incident at the same time, they're  
22 going to get into a shootout with each other. And so our  
23 understanding was -- [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED] was, first responders are the February 17th  
25 Martyrs Brigade.

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. [REDACTED] Nobody on the American side called them.

Q You had indicated that you, would share information [REDACTED] pretty much on a daily basis, and that certainly when you would get a report from State, they would always invite you, that if you had any questions, I think as you put it, you should follow-up [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]. Do you recall saying that?

2 A Yes. The information, at the time I only had up to  
3 a top secret clearance, so at the time, if the report came  
4 over and they had to get us a secret level tear line, there  
5 were generally was SCI level reporting that could expound on  
6 that tear line. And so the principal officer or the RSO  
7 could read the tear line [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED].

9 Q And do you recall -- [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED] Do you recall any instances where, you know,  
12 the principal officer, the lead RSO, [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED] you or someone else?

15 A [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]

18 Q So, that was a resource that was available to them  
19 and used by them as needed or appropriate?

20 A Usually.

21 Q Now you did also indicate that oftentimes you would  
22 be sharing information that you were gathering and your  
23 colleagues were gathering, and I think you said even you felt  
24 like more often [REDACTED]

25 [REDACTED]

1           You said you and some of your colleagues had a concern  
2           or a belief that the June 6 IED attack might have been  
3           carried out by some folks who associated or affiliated or  
4           supported the Blind Sheikh. Did you share that information  
5           [REDACTED]?

6           A     We did. You know, I mean, that was our belief,  
7           but, you know, although that was our belief, it wasn't really  
8           rooted in a whole lot. You know, but that was just, seemed  
9           to be the popular group. There were reports of people taking  
10          credit for it, so that's kind of what we based our belief and  
11          speculation on. Did share it [REDACTED] on a couple of  
12          occasions. Their response or their reporting, I don't  
13          recall.

14          Q     So, you don't recall if they ever then circled back  
15          and either said, yes, we have some additional intel that  
16          either supports or refutes that belief about the Blind Sheikh  
17          and the potential involvement of folks around the June 6 to  
18          the Blind Sheikh?

19          A     You know, there might have been some reporting, but  
20          I don't recall, and I can't say it wasn't shown to me but  
21          just here today, nothing that I can recall.

22          Q     And what about the June 8, rally; do you recall  
23          sharing any information about that [REDACTED]  
24          [REDACTED]

25          A     Yes, ma'am. We did.

1 Q And had they known about that June 8 rally before  
2 you guys brought it to their attention?

3 A That I don't recall.

4 Q So, do you recall if they were surprised to hear  
5 about the rally?

6 A I know they appreciated the information.

7 Q And was there any follow-up on that? Did they then  
8 circle back with you guys to share any additional intel  
9 around the June 8, rally?

10 A Just that later on it was verified. How that got  
11 verified, [REDACTED]

12 [REDACTED]  
13 Q And what was the "it" part of that that got  
14 verified?

15 A Just the fact that the large number of technicals  
16 flying the black flag were present in Benghazi.

17 Q And did they indicate any concern that that posed a  
18 risk to the mission in any way?

19 A I think we all discussed that it, you know, I mean,  
20 when you have a thousand or approximately -- that was what  
21 was estimated to be the number of technicals there -- that,  
22 you know, yes, there were those technicals in town and there  
23 and what seemed to be a surprise for the local authorities, I  
24 think that was concerning for all of us.

25 Q And so what did you guys do in response to that

1 concern?

2 A You know, if we heard about the protest during the  
3 day, we would have stopped all moves for the day or stopped  
4 all moves the following day and stayed on compound, but as  
5 far as what the RSO reported back or who the principal  
6 officer reported to, you know, there wasn't much we could  
7 change on a security posture that hadn't already been  
8 elevated due to the bombing.

9 Q And do you recall [REDACTED] recommending  
10 anything in particular in response to that incident, that  
11 June 8, rally?

12 A No, I don't recall anything.

13 Q Do you recall if they adjusted their security  
14 posture in any way?

15 A At one point while I was there, they did change  
16 their movement policy. They did make it more restrictive or  
17 provide additional security for every single move. What the  
18 specifics of those were, I don't recall; but I do know for a  
19 fact that they bumped up security on the movements.

20 Q [REDACTED]?

21 A Yes, ma'am.

22 Q Okay. And do you recall approximately when that  
23 happened?

24 A No, ma'am. I mean, no, I don't recall when.

25 Q And when they were doing that, do you remember any



1 corresponding recommendations to the mission folks to change  
2 your security posture in any way?

3 A I mean, we coordinated on every single thing we  
4 were doing with them, you know. I mean, [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED], so I mean, we always welcomed whatever  
6 input; but a lot of the input they would provide us was stuff  
7 we already knew and were adjusting. So --

8 BY MS. ROBINSON:

9 Q While you were there, were you aware of any  
10 discussions [REDACTED]?

11 A I was told that those discussions were taking  
12 place.

13 Q Did you get any impression if there were dissenting  
14 opinions as to whether [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]?

16 A All I knew was the discussion was taking place, and  
17 there were multiple ideas. Who those ideas belonged to and  
18 how it should happen --

19 Q Were you aware of some of the reasons behind why  
20 there were discussions [REDACTED]?

21 A Yes, ma'am.

22 Q And what would those be?

23 A One of the reasons I understood it was by  
24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]  
2 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
3 [REDACTED], [REDACTED]  
4 [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED]

6 Q Was there a security component involved as well  
7 [REDACTED]? Would it be potentially safer [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED]?

9 A I would assume. But, again, I was not privy to  
10 those conversations.

11 Q Okay.

12 BY MS. SAWYER:

13 Q And do you know who was having those conversations?

14 A I could guess, but that would be I mean, principal  
15 officer, personnel back in Tripoli.

16 Q Were you aware of any disadvantages to [REDACTED]?

17 A Disadvantages to? And in what context?

18 Q [REDACTED]  
19 [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED]

21 A None that I was aware of.

22 Q From your understanding, were there a lot of  
23 potential sites that could be used for [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED]

25 A Again, I had been on DS for about a year and a

1 half, and this was a multi, multi-million dollar venture that  
2 I would imagine was taking place being discussed at a high  
3 level. So, my job was to take the principal officer to his  
4 venue, get him back home safely.

5 Q Okay. From all of our discussions today, is there  
6 anything that you have thought of that you want to provide  
7 further clarification on or information that you think that  
8 we should hear?

9 A I've got nothing.

10 Ms. Robinson. Okay.

11 Ms. Jackson. All right. I think we're done. Agent  
12 [REDACTED], thank you very much. It's been a long day, but we  
13 really appreciate your coming and talking to this committee.  
14 Thank you very much.

15 Mr. [REDACTED]. Thank you all for your time. I appreciate  
16 it.

17 [Whereupon, at 2:46 p.m., the interview concluded.]  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

## EXHIBIT 1

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]  
From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 9:02 AM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: RE: Was going on?

Shit went boom - bomb blew a hole in the front wall next to the office around 3am

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2012 5:59 AM  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Was going on?

Everyone ok?

[REDACTED]  
Special Agent  
DS/ICI/[REDACTED]  
BB [REDACTED]

SBU  
Sent via Blackberry

## EXHIBIT 2

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 08, 2012 3:17 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: dates?>

No worries brother... [REDACTED] is taking care of the dates; he will forward the info. Yeah, fun times here in Benghazi. We get bombed now everyone in DC is doing what they can to beef up TRIPOLI!!! Are you freakin kidding me?!?!? We get bombed and they throw money at Tripoli!

Oh..before you come out here, make sure you get a ClassNet account...you will be receiving emails on the high side.

And check out this link - <http://www.starafrika.com/en/news/detail-news/view/armed-men-rally-for-islamic-law-in-libya-236554.html>

This can't be good...it is the first rally of its kind in Benghazi. Militia guys that support Sharia law (anywhere else in the world, they are called insurgents/terrorists)..they have Technicals (trucks with high caliber weapons mounted on the back of them) - awesome

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 07, 2012 3:38 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: dates?>

Stand by on that brother, I'm working on verifying that. Will likely be arriving on or about 7/13, departing on or about 8/15. Stand by for concrete dates. Be safe out there. I'm looking forward to joining the party.

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 07, 2012 09:30 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** dates?>

Hey bro...can you send me your departure/arrival dates?

The day you arrive in Benghazi and the day you depart Benghazi. Not the day you depart from the US and arrive back in the US

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

## EXHIBIT 3

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 7:30 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: DS Broadcast: TDY ARSO Support for U.S. Mission Tripoli and Benghazi  
**Attachments:** image001.png

You will read about Benghazi again today..a bomb was placed in a car belonging to a local election official; detonated in the middle of a big market this morning – so far, no injuries..but still, this place is going to shit – quick!

That is a great idea, [REDACTED] coming over here – that way, he could bring some of that Ebola virus (or whatever it is he picked up over there) over to Libya and get rid of some of the terrorists!

Seriously though – this place is bad. Until yesterday, I had never been nervous about motorcade movements..now, who knows! Went to the UK compound and saw my buddy covered in blood with a massive wound to his shoulder – 5 days prior I was next to an IED when it went off; yesterday they bombed the Red Cross in Misrata and today a car bomb in a city market...I wanted EER fodder, but not like this

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 4:24 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: DS Broadcast: TDY ARSO Support for U.S. Mission Tripoli and Benghazi

Haha. Yeah. Really glamorous too. I'm reading about Benghazi in the papers everyday.

Get out of that place soon. I'm headed to [REDACTED] at the end of July for 60. [REDACTED]

Btw, your boy [REDACTED] could hop right into Libya from Dhaka. It'd be a smooth transition. [REDACTED] would totally sign off. Just like how [REDACTED] extended her Amman TDY by asking the SAC after [REDACTED] denied her an extension. [REDACTED] is super psyched that [REDACTED] jumped the chain to serve her own needs. [REDACTED]

Also, [REDACTED]  
 [REDACTED]  
 Special Agent  
 Diplomatic Security Service  
 c [REDACTED]  
 o 201-346-8192

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 03:54 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: DS Broadcast: TDY ARSO Support for U.S. Mission Tripoli and Benghazi

Dude...sign up for a Benghazi TDY – its great over here!! Easy living, really safe

## EXHIBIT 4

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 12:01 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: [REDACTED]

Thanks for helping out! Yeah, things are pretty fucked up over here. IED at the embassy compound, RPG attack on the UK guy (we responded to secure the compound and [REDACTED] provided medical support)...and two more explosions today – this places is getting worse!

Thanks again for reaching out to [REDACTED] – see ya in August

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 6:01 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: [REDACTED]

Hey man, I have been paying attention to what's going on there. Sounds like a laugh a minute. Trust no one and keep your head down. Its hard to tell who's who in those situations. If you need anything here let me know.

OK, below you will see what I sent [REDACTED]. When he responds I will reach out [REDACTED] with anything helpful. I will keep you posted.

Stay safe,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(O) 201-346-8220  
(C) [REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 8:58 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: [REDACTED]

Hey [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Thank you sir. If you should need anything here please let me know.

Hugs,  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

(O) 201-346-8220

(C) [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 13, 2012 4:00 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [REDACTED]

Hey [REDACTED]  
Hope things are going well [REDACTED] — I am living the dream in Benghazi.  
[REDACTED]

Thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] [mailto:[REDACTED]@nypd.org]  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 17, 2012 11:15 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Sorry its taken so long to get you this information, but you know how busy it can get.  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.



REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

Thanks again for the help.

.....

All information is confidential unless authorized to disseminate.

## EXHIBIT 5

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 20, 2012 9:58 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: UNGA 67 positions

Hahaha....too much to say over email. I will give you a call...but regardless of all the attacks, we need to "normalize" things here, as we have been told

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 20, 2012 5:54 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: UNGA 67 positions

Ok. I am sitting now. So what's up with Benghazi. Is the Mission RSO not recalling you guys back to Tripoli? At least are they giving you more bodies...even though it is a house really

SBU  
 This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 20, 2012 5:41 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: UNGA 67 positions

Hi [REDACTED]  
 I hope things are going well for you [REDACTED] — things are a bit exciting (read: boomy/explosive) here in Benghazi. For UNGA, feel free to put me wherever you need. Last year I was Lead Advance for the Turks and would like to advance a High Threat detail this year. On the other hand, as I was a Lead Adv last year, maybe doing something else would look better on my EER. So wherever you and [REDACTED] need, I will go.

Thanks [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, June 15, 2012 6:08 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** UNGA 67 positions

Hello,

I am covering for [REDACTED] during his leave. You have been identified as not being assigned to a position for UNGA yet. Currently, there is one airport vacancy and two PSU vacancies. In addition, the lead advances are available. Please respond individually with your preferences. There is a caveat to your preferences, UNGA support personnel will be filled first and not everyone will get a high threat detail. So please respond but know that you may be directed to a certain position. Thank you.

## EXHIBIT 6

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 25, 2012 4:26 PM  
**To:** Benghazi RSO  
**Subject:** Fw: Tdy ARSO

For you situational awareness - [REDACTED] will be traveling with a classified pouch.

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 25, 2012 04:22 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Tdy ARSO

[REDACTED]

Thanks for the Intel. My understanding is that the [REDACTED] will be in a class pouch. I don't believe [REDACTED] are classified items, but that's how I was instructed.

[REDACTED]  
Special Agent  
U.S. Department of State  
Diplomatic Security Service  
[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 25, 2012 11:51 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Tdy ARSO

[REDACTED]

Apologies in the delay in getting back to you. You do **NOT/NOT** need the following items:

Armor plates  
SPE  
Restraints  
Kevlar Helmet

**Do bring the following items:**

Radio  
Radio Battery (plus spare – the batteries here are old and die quickly)  
PRS Wires – I would bring them. I have only used them once...most of the time we don't use wires, but they are good to have in case there is a dignitary visit.

We will coordinate your arrival, we have fixers and other people to smooth the process. Will the PTLs [REDACTED] be in an unclass pouch? I would also bring cash (USD). Upon departure, if you are required to pay an overweight baggage fee, the only form of payment accepted at the airport is Libyan Dinars (which our MGT officer can exchange for you). Also, unlike many other posts, there is no check-cashing ability here.

If you have any more questions – please feel free to let me know!  
Thanks

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Tuesday, July 24, 2012 8:36 AM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: Tdy ARSO

I've attached my itinerary to this message. I should arrive Aug 11<sup>th</sup>. Also, I was wondering if you could refine the packing list I was given. My understanding is that we should **not** bring armor plates, SPE, or restraints. However I've gotten conflicting info about bringing a Kevlar helmet, radio, PRS wires, and batteries. Can you shed some light on what is really SOP?

Finally, I'll be doing a non-pro courier mission for Benghazi on my way in, so I will need to definitely coordinate transport at the airport and drop off in the pouch room.

Thanks,

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Monday, July 16, 2012 4:02 AM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: RE: Tdy ARSO

Hi [REDACTED]

No bother at all - thanks for reaching out. It has been a crazy ass TDY...from a nice slow pace, to shit blowing up and now back to relative calm. The RSO shop varies from 2-5 agents but 3 is the new minimum. Currently we have 5 - but that will only last for a week or so and then it will be back down to 4. We have some of the standard programs here (LGF contract, physical security, badging, PRS, etc...) and each agent normally takes on a couple of those programs (example: I deal with the LGF and vehicles as my two main programs).

The housing and accommodation out here is pretty good, as is the food. We have a pool, but the filters are on back-order so our pool is currently drained.

As for wearing suits, I would not bring a suit. We do a decent amount of protection (all are 1 car moves, with RSO and local driver and the PO) but I have never dressed up for it. At most, bring a blazer and some khakis. I have never worn a blazer on any of the details, but it is good to have it. Also, the laundry is done every day - so you can get by on relatively few clothes.

I am sure there is a ton of stuff I am missing...if you have any more questions, please feel free to ask. Also, could you send us a copy of your itinerary once your ticket is purchased?

Thanks,

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]  
 Sent: Sunday, July 15, 2012 8:56 AM  
 To: [REDACTED]  
 Subject: Tdy ARSO

REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

Sorry to bother you, I know you must be busy. I'll be joining the mission there in Benghazi this August. If you could take some time to share any useful hints from your stay there, I'd appreciate it.

Specifically, I wonder if you guys are wearing suits out there. I hear the mission is more low-profile.

Thanks for your time.

[REDACTED]  
Special Agent  
U.S. Department of State  
Diplomatic Security Service  
[REDACTED]

SBU  
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.



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**INTERVIEW OF  
PRINCIPAL OFFICER #3**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, MARCH 26, 2015

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

SHARON JACKSON, *Deputy Chief Counsel*

CARLTON DAVIS, *Counsel*

SARA BARRINEAU, *Investigator*

SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*

HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*

PETER KENNY, *Minority Senior Counsel*

BRENT WOOLFORK, *Minority Senior Professional Staff*

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

AUSTIN EVERS, *Senior Advisor*



Ms. Clarke. This is a transcribed interview of [REDACTED] conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. This interview is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation into the attacks on the U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya, and related matters pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th Congress, and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Could you please state your name for the record.

Mr. [REDACTED] For the record, my name is [REDACTED].

Ms. Clarke. And for the record, will you please spell your last name.

Mr. [REDACTED] Last name is spelled [REDACTED].

Ms. Clarke. Thank you.

Mr. [REDACTED] You're welcome.

Ms. Clarke. This committee appreciates your appearance at this interview, and we appreciate you coming in voluntarily. My name is Sheria Clarke. I'm with the committee's majority staff. And we'll just take a moment to have everyone introduce themselves for the record.

Mr. Evers. Austin Evers from the State Department.

Ms. Jackson. Sharon Jackson with the majority staff.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority staff.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority staff.

Mr. Woolfork. Brent Woolfork on the minority staff.

Mr. Davis. I'm Carlton Davis, and I work for Mr. Gowdy.

Ms. Barrineau. I'm Sara Barrineau with majority staff.

Ms. Clarke. And before we begin, I would like to go over some

ground rules and explain how the interview will proceed.

Mr. [REDACTED] Excellent.

Ms. Clarke. The way the questions will proceed is that a member from the majority will ask questions for up to an hour and then the minority will have an opportunity to ask questions for an equal period of time, if they choose. We will firmly adhere to the 1-hour time limit for each side. Questions may only be asked by a member of the committee or designated staff members. And I will rotate back and forth 1 hour per side until we're finished with our questions.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

Ms. Clarke. Unlike in testimony or a deposition in Federal court, the committee format is not bound by the rules of evidence. The witness or their counsel may raise objections for privilege subject to review by the chairman of the committee. If these objections can't be resolved in the interview, the witness can be required to return for a deposition or hearing.

Members and staff of the committee, however, are not permitted to raise objections when the other side is asking questions. This has not been an issue we've encountered in the past, but I want to make sure you're clear on the process.

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Ms. Clarke. Currently, this will begin in an unclassified setting. If there are any questions that you believe call for a classified answer, then we'll move into a classified setting at a later point and address those questions.

Mr. [REDACTED] Very well.

Ms. Clarke. You're welcome to confer with counsel at any time throughout the interview. If something needs to be clarified, feel free to ask. We want to make sure that you understand the questions.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

Ms. Clarke. If you need to discuss anything with your counsel, we'll go off the record and stop the clock to provide you this opportunity.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

Ms. Clarke. We like to take a break whenever it's convenient for you. This could be after every hour of questioning or after a couple of rounds, whatever works best for you.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

Ms. Clarke. If you need anything, a glass of water, use of the facilities, confer with your counsel, feel free to ask and we'll take a break.

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Ms. Clarke. And I apologize, I'm working through a cold so --

Mr. [REDACTED] Aren't we all.

Ms. Clarke. -- I will occasionally cough.

As you can see, an official reporter is taking down everything you say to make a written record, so we ask that you give verbal responses to all questions, yes, no, as opposed to nods of heads and I'll ask the reporter to jump in if she sees a nonverbal response.

Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

Ms. Clarke. So, we should both try not to talk over each other so it's easier to get a clear record. We want you to answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner possible, so we'll take our time and repeat or clarify the questions if necessary. If you have any questions and if you don't understand any of our questions, please feel free to let us know.

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Ms. Clarke. If you honestly don't know the answer to a question or do not remember, it's best not to guess. Just give us your best recollection. And if there are things you don't know or don't remember, if you know someone who might have a better recollection of it, just give us that individual's name.

You're required to answer questions from Congress truthfully. Do you understand that?

Mr. [REDACTED] I do.

Ms. Clarke. This also applies to questions posed by congressional staff in an interview. Do you understand that?

Mr. [REDACTED] I do.

Ms. Clarke. Witnesses that knowingly provide false testimony could be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury for making false statements. Do you understand that?

Mr. [REDACTED] I do.

Ms. Clarke. Is there any reason you are unable to provide truthful answers to today's questions?

Mr. [REDACTED] None whatsoever.

Ms. Clarke. Great. So, that's the end of my preamble. Does the minority have anything they'd like to add?

Ms. Sawyer. We're all set. Thank you.

Ms. Clarke. All right. So the clock reads now 10:06, and we'll get started with the first hour of questions.

Mr. [REDACTED] Very well.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So Mr. [REDACTED], can you just give us a brief background of when you started with the State Department and some of your various assignments.

A Very happy to. I joined the Department of State in 1991, and after initial training, I served first at the U.S. Embassy in Amman, Jordan; following that, I served at the U.S. Consulate in Naples, Italy; I served then on consecutive assignments at the State Department in Washington, first in the Bureau of Political Military Affairs, then as the desk officer responsible for Yemen, Kuwait, and Bahrain in the Office of Arabian Peninsula Affairs.

I served with the Kosovo Diplomatic Observer Mission in Kosovo; following that at the U.S. Embassy in Sarajevo, Bosnia. I returned to Washington then and served consecutive assignments first in the office responsible for our relations with NATO, and then secondly, in the office responsible for the Balkans. Following that, I served as the political and economic counselor of our embassy in Budapest, Hungary, returning for a brief interim assignment in the Office of

Arabian Peninsula Affairs; following which, I served in the office of policy planning, SP, as we call it on the secretary staff; and then as the director of the office responsible for economic and development affairs in the Office of International Organization Affairs.

I am presently in long-term Arabic language training prior to assignment overseas.

Q And during your tenure with the State Department, did you have an opportunity to serve in Benghazi, Libya?

A I did, in fact. I served as the principal officer in Benghazi, Libya, in July and August of 2012.

Q And how did you become aware of that opportunity? Were you assigned, or did you volunteer for that opportunity?

A I volunteered for that opportunity.

Q Was it something that was advertised throughout the State Department?

A I don't immediately recall whether or not it was advertised. I was personal friends with Ambassador Stevens, as well as with other officials who were working in the Near East Bureau at that time.

Q Do you recall if Ambassador Stevens or someone in the Near East Bureau requested that or asked you to become a part of the this assignment?

A I volunteered.

Q Okay.

A Obviously, it did occur. But as I recall, I volunteered. I initiated the inquiry.

Q Okay. Prior to your arrival in Benghazi, what did you know about the assignment in Benghazi? What was your role going to be as the principal officer on the task that you were going to perform?

A I spoke to a number of officials in Washington prior to departure for Benghazi. I understood the role of our mission in Benghazi to be to observe, analyze, interpret, and report on events on the ground, to advocate for American policy positions there.

Q And what did you know about the -- in speaking with individuals in Washington or anyone that was in Libya, what were you aware of regarding the security situation in Benghazi?

A Based on my consultations at that time and based on media reports, I understood this security situation to be uncertain overall.

Q What do you mean by uncertain?

A I understood before my arrival that in the immediate aftermath of the downfall of the Qadhafi regime and the liberation of the country, that Libya was in a transitional period. I understood that on the ground there were various factions, and I understood that the central government authority in Tripoli was working to establish its control and authority over the security situation.

Q Okay. Prior to going to Benghazi, did you participate in the foreign affairs counterterrorism training or similar training?

A I did. Over the course of my career, I've had a variety of security-related training. And in the immediate run-up to my departure for Benghazi, I had special training, commonly referred to in the State Department as "Crash and Bang," which gives instruction

in a variety of issues to include paramedic training, weapons training, and defensive and offensive driving techniques.

Q Now, is that different than FACTS training?

A I believe it is. Among other training that I've had over the course of my career, for example, I've had training in observation of surveillance, general security awareness. Crash and Bang is specifically focused for officers who are bound for special posts at that time, for example, Iraq and Afghanistan among them.

Q Okay. Now, was this a requirement for you to take that course prior to going to Benghazi?

A Yes, it was.

Q And do you know if that was a requirement for other -- was that for your position only, or was it for all individuals that were going to Benghazi?

A I don't know.

Q Okay. Do you know if your predecessor or your successor took those courses as well or were required to take those courses?

A I do not know.

Q Okay. Now, you stated that you arrived in Benghazi in July. Did you -- was there a time gap between your arrival and the previous principal officers leaving Benghazi?

A Yes, there was. There --

Q Do you know how long that timeframe was?

A I believe it was a matter of weeks.

Q Okay. Did you have an opportunity to speak with the



previous principal officer?

A I did, here in Washington.

Q Okay. And did the principal officer provide you any turnover notes or any documents related to her -- the things that she was pursuing and what she thought you might be interested in pursuing as the principal officer?

A We spoke in person here in Washington following her return and prior to my departure. Upon arrival in Benghazi, there were a number of notes, contact lists, et cetera, at the mission as well.

Q Okay. So, you mentioned a little bit that some of your -- what you were discussed -- prior to leaving Washington, you talked to some individuals in Washington about what your role would be in Benghazi, to observe, analyze, and interpret events on the ground. What was -- did you have an understanding of what the U.S. interest in Libya was at that time?

A I did discuss our Libya policy overall, our interests there, and then particularly how our presence in Benghazi fit into that broader equation, yes.

Q And how did the presence in Benghazi fit into the U.S. interests overall in Libya?

A Benghazi played a unique role in Libya, as the cradle of its revolution. And we, the United States, played a unique role there. I thought that our presence was both practically and symbolically important. We were able to establish and maintain contacts across a wide spectrum, not only across the political spectrum but academia in

the business community as well. I felt that our presence there was valued and considered very important among the wide range of Libyans that I met, not least because it demonstrated our attention to the process of the transition.

Q You said that you felt that the presence was practical and symbolic. Can we break that down a little bit. Why did you feel that the U.S. presence was practical?

A Practically, we were able to make contacts with people on the ground in all walks of life. We were able to observe events in realtime. We were able to emphasize U.S. Government positions to them.

Symbolically, the Libyans with whom I met, across their political spectrum, expressed how much they valued American presence there, how much they thought it was important, how much they thought it sent a clear message to them as they worked through their transition.

Q What was the message that they thought the U.S. presence sent to them?

A They felt that it represented our continuing attention to the transition. They felt, in particular, that our presence there was a symbol of our attention, and they felt that as they turned to their elections and into the formulation of their constitution, they felt that our good offices and our role as an honest broker was especially important.

Q You mentioned the elections. So, you had recently arrived when the elections in Libya occurred on the 7th, is that correct,

July 7, 2012?

A Correct.

Q Can you describe for us what the environment was like leading up to the elections and following the elections?

A Yes. Broadly, the elections were the principal focus of attention. There was an international presence there, not just in Benghazi but across the country as these were nationwide elections. It was the object of great public focus. In the immediate run-up to the election, there were a number of incidents. On election day itself, I was one of the international observers at polling stations in and around Benghazi.

Q When you said there were a number of incidents leading up to the election day, can you elaborate further on those?

A There were reports of attempts to ensure that polling stations did not open, for example. There were reports of attempts to interfere with ballots or ballot boxes, for example.

Q Were these interferences by one particular organization, or were there multiple organizations involved in these events?

A There were various allegations as to responsibility for the events. The prevailing theory at that time was that these were the efforts of separatist elements. I did not personally witness any of these events. I want to emphasize that these were largely based on reports in the media or elsewhere, and that in my contacts on election day, I did not see any effort to impede voters or to otherwise interfere in the process.

Q Okay. And following the election, what was the environment like, within the -- in the timeframe of a week after the election, what was the environment in Benghazi, Libya, like?

A There was euphoria, frankly, among most of the Libyans with whom I spoke. They felt that the elections had been successful in terms of their conduct. They thought that this demonstrated Libya's ability to clear a very important hurdle. They felt that the election results themselves represented a consensus for moderate government. And the majority of my Libyan contacts then identified the formulation of a constitution as the next hurdle.

Q Prior to the general national elections, were there also elections that occurred in Benghazi? This may have been before your tenure there, but were there local elections that occurred in Benghazi?

A I do not know. Obviously, my expertise is principally regarding my limited time there. I did meet one official, for example, who I understood had been involved in the preparations for local elections, so I believe that's true, but I don't have the firsthand knowledge.

Q Okay. As the principal officer, can you just describe for us some of the -- well, describe for us the movements and the restrictions or the parameters for movements within the city and outside of the city that you had.

A Overall, I would describe our movements and indeed all of our efforts and all of our actions as prudent. We remained in constant contact with a wide range of local and international officials. As

a matter of course, when we conducted movements in and around Benghazi, we did so in multi-vehicle convoys. We conducted movements with RSO support at all times. If there were, for example, reports of incidents in particular places, we would take that into account in determining whether and how we would conduct movements in and around the city.

Q When you say particular places, do you mean that there were certain areas that if there was an incident there, that you would take into account how you conducted movements, or if there were just incidents in general that you heard about you would take that into account?

A Both.

Q Okay. Now, you said that you always conducted your movements with RSO support?

A Uh-huh.

Q Was that something -- was that in place at the time that you came or was that different -- do you know if that was different for the previous principal officer?

A I simply don't know what the practice was prior to my arrival. From the time of my arrival and throughout my tenure there, this was our practice.

Q Okay. And how many DS agents were present in Benghazi when you arrived?

A I don't recall if it was four or five.

Q Okay. Do you recall if the number, during your time in Benghazi, ever reached five?

A It may have at a time of overlap, during the transition, during the rotation of personnel. I don't immediately recall.

Q Do you recall what the, in general, what was the number of DS agents that were present with you in Benghazi?

A On average, four.

Q Four. And was that -- did you feel that was sufficient for you to be able to conduct movements that you needed to make?

A I felt that we were able to do our job. I felt that we did so prudently. I felt that we were able to ensure that -- what movements we felt we needed to conduct we did so to maximize security. And I felt that we had the flexibility if we felt that it was more prudent, for example, to host a meeting than to travel to it, that we would adjust to that.

Q During your time there, did you have instances where you felt that you needed more DS agents present?

A Through my time there, I felt that we were able to work effectively with the personnel we had on hand.

Q Did you ever request -- send a request to Tripoli or back to D.C. requesting for more DS agents or more security?

A Communication on security issues was principally through Tripoli. As a subsidiary post, we communicated first with the embassy rather than directly to Washington. I don't remember specifically making personnel-related requests. Certainly, our RSO staff was in direct communication with RSO Tripoli as well. And certainly, the broad security situation overall was part of our broad dialogue, both

with Tripoli and then back to the department in Washington as well.

Q Okay. When you arrived in Benghazi, can you describe for us -- a brief description of the compound, the types of buildings that were in the compound and the size of the compound.

A Of course. The compound was a relatively large piece of property in a residential neighborhood in Benghazi. I was told following my arrival that it had two landlords, that the -- what was the sum total of our compound was owned by different individuals. It had at one time been divided by a wall, which by the time of my arrival had been removed.

On the compound, there was a residential building, which was where my quarters were. There was an office building and a third building called the canteen, which had the cooking facilities and also capacity if people were there, for example, to overnight.

Q And did the DS agents also reside in the building where your quarters were?

A Some did, yes.

Q Okay. And then was there also another building that housed the -- what has been referred to as the QRF or the Quick Response Force?

A There was a building that housed the Libyan security personnel that was adjacent to one of the gates, yes.

Q What was your understanding of the link of the entire mission, as far as how long was the mission going to be present in Benghazi?

A My understanding was that through my tenure, and at the time

of my departure, there were discussions ongoing about the long-term disposition of our presence in Benghazi.

Q And were you involved in those discussions?

A I was, yes, to the extent that I was in contact with Embassy Tripoli and afforded them my perspective based on my experience there.

Q And what was your perspective?

A I felt that our presence there was valuable. I thought it was effective. And I thought there was a role for a modest and a flexible continuing diplomatic presence in Benghazi.

Q What did you mean by modest and flexible?

A I felt that it need not be a large mission. I felt that, for example, with support from Tripoli on specific issues, that we could be effective in gathering information, conveying information, and assisting the Libyans as they worked through their transition.

Q What were some of the specific issues that you felt you needed support from Tripoli regarding?

A I felt, for example, that we would be able to make good use of visits from consular personnel, for example, who would be able to address concerns of American citizens in the region. I felt that we would also be able to make a good use of visits from public diplomacy personnel, who would be able to ensure that Benghazi was part of our nationwide approach for engagement with the Libyan public.

Q When you said that you felt that the presence could be small, did you believe that the current size was sufficient, or were you -- did you feel that it should be smaller or larger?



A I felt that we were approximately right sized. I don't recall that I ever recommended a specific number. I think that whatever our disposition was, theoretically, there was a point where it would have been too small to be effective, but I felt that, roughly, we were in the neighborhood of being right sized.

Q Okay. Prior to your departure from Benghazi, was there a final decision made about the length of the mission, to your knowledge?

A To my knowledge, there had not been.

Q To your knowledge, what -- did you have an understanding of whether it was -- the decision was leaning more towards continuing the mission in Benghazi or to closing the mission?

A I did not have a sense as to how that debate was or the discussions were going.

Q Okay. Now, just to step back a little bit and talk more about the villas, were you aware of physical -- any type of physical security requirements that are in place for buildings that are -- for buildings that are -- I'm sorry. Let me start over -- physical requirements by the State Department for buildings or for areas such as where you were, as far as like what the setbacks, you mentioned there was a wall and a setback, were you aware of those types of requirements?

A I was aware that there are guidelines, for example, particularly with respect to setback, which I felt in Benghazi we had, given the outer perimeter of that. But in terms of the granular specifics of that, I would rely on RS0.

Q Okay. Did you have any knowledge of whether or not the

facilities in Benghazi met the physical security requirements?

A I did not. I knew that improvements had been made, certainly. I knew that discussion or dialogue on security issues was open and continuing, and I knew that there was an ongoing discussion about the long-term disposition of our presence there.

Q Were you aware of any improvements or requests for improvements made during your time in Benghazi?

A Requests would've been RSO to RSO. I don't immediately recall what any of the technical request, if any, would've been.

Q Would have had discussions with the RSO about requests that he was interested in making?

A We were a small mission, and certainly, discussion of all issues was open and robust.

Q Okay. But you don't recall any specific requests made during your time in Benghazi?

A Sitting here today, sometime after, I don't immediately recall any, no.

Q Okay. So, we talked a little bit about the number of DS agents that were in Benghazi, and we also mentioned that there was a building that housed the QRF. Can you describe for us who the QRF were and what their role was?

A Yes. The QRF was composed of a number of individuals. Their presence predated my arrival. My understanding was that their presence was arranged via a contractual arrangement with the February 17 or 2/17 Militia.

Q And what was your opinion of the QRF that were on the compound as far as their conduct and how they met their contractual obligation?

A I felt their presence was helpful. I felt that they were able to help us communicate with February 17, which was an influential group on the ground. They accompanied us often on movements, which I felt, again, was very helpful as we transited around the city. I felt they were a good source of information. I felt their local knowledge was very helpful for our general awareness.

Q Were you aware of any issues that arose with any members of the individuals from February 17 that were assigned to the QRF?

A I know that the assignment of individuals was initially made by the militia. And as I recall, during my tenure there, one of the members of the QRF left and moved to Tripoli.

Q Do you recall why he left?

A My understanding was that after his departure I was told that he had had an interpersonal conflict with one of the other members of the QRF.

Q So, following the election, I guess around the beginning of August, is my understanding was the Ramadan period?

A Yes.

Q And how long does that period last?

A Ramadan is based on the lunar calendar. It runs usually a matter of some weeks. That year, Ramadan fell at the height of summer, which meant that it was going to be long in duration and that

the individual days would be longest because it runs sunset to sundown. Certainly, several weeks, perhaps even half or even slightly more of my time in Benghazi was during Ramadan.

Q Okay. And did that have any impact on the QRF members, absenteeism or any other types of issues?

A I would say overall, the pace during Ramadan in Benghazi, and more broadly, slowed considerably during the holiday, in terms of just our ability to find officials who were in town for meetings. Many Libyans were on vacation. We were able to ensure that members of the QRF had the opportunity, for example, to be with their families during the holiday, but RSO worked to ensure that we were always able to have sufficient staffing.

Q Were there instances where -- well, let me ask you this: To your knowledge, what was the contractual requirement, the number of individuals that were contractually required to be on compound for the QRF?

A I do not recall, and I never saw the contract.

Q Okay. Were you aware if it was four individuals that were required to be on compound?

A I, again, never saw the contract. I'm not aware.

Q Okay. Were you -- in your discussions with the RSO, did he ever mention to you that there were -- that the number of individuals that were supposed to be on compound at any point during your time there were not -- that number was not reached?

A I do not immediately recall that, no.

Q Okay. During Ramadan, did you -- or were you aware of the RSO requesting any additional security from the Libyan Government or from the police, the Libyan, Benghazi police?

A Yes. I do recall that during my time there we made a formal request of the Libyan authorities to ensure a police presence immediately in the vicinity of the mission.

Q And what prompted that request?

A Over the course of my time there, there were incidents, and I thought it was, again, prudent to try to ensure a local presence as well. This was consistent as well with ongoing efforts to ensure clear local authorities in the realm of security.

Q And was that request for a police presence actually fulfilled?

A It was honored. They did provide a marked Libyan police car with uniformed police officers in it in response to our request. But I do not know if that was permanent or if it continued following my departure.

Q Okay. And do you know if that request had any -- was prompted at all by any absences that may have been caused during the Ramadan period?

A I don't recall whether that was in any way linked to that.

Q Okay.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Before we move on to another topic, I have just a couple follow-up questions to some that Ms. Clarke had asked. I believe you

said that there was approximately a couple-week gap between when [REDACTED] left and you arrived in Benghazi; is that correct?

A There is a gap. I don't know immediately how long it might have been.

Q More than a day or two?

A Certainly more than a day or two.

Q Okay. Was there a reason for the gap? I mean, was it just a matter of traveling in or other commitments, or was there any other reason, any security-related reason for the gap?

A Not to my knowledge. My rotation to Benghazi was to be for a limited period. That period was negotiated by my present office for the period that I was to be overseas. I very much wanted to be there for the elections. That was very much, I think, my goal to be there to ensure that presence. So, I don't recall that that was motivated by that.

Q Okay. So, you were unaware that there was a series of security incidents that occurred in June of 2012 that caused a pause in the coverage of the Benghazi Mission?

A I was aware on the basis of my consultations before departure that there had been incidents in Benghazi. Certainly, security was part of my dialogue during my consultations here. And certainly, I confirmed before my departure for Benghazi, that I should proceed to post and was told to do so.

Q Okay. Did your start date ever change before you actually got there? Did it ever shift in any way?

A There may have been some fluctuation. I don't immediately recall. But I can say broadly in the context of my career overall, it is not uncommon to have start dates slip or move left or right.

Q Okay. And do you recall approximately when you did arrive in Benghazi?

A I believe it was July 2 that I arrived.

Q Approximately, so a little less than a week before the elections?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And then how long did you stay?

A I left Benghazi for Tripoli on August 30, as I recall, and departed from Tripoli on August 31.

Q Okay. When you came into Libya, did you travel in through Tripoli or did you go straight into Benghazi?

A I transited Istanbul direct into Benghazi.

Q Okay. And was Ambassador Stevens on location in Tripoli as the ambassador when you came to Benghazi?

A I don't recall if he was in the country at that time. I recall, for example, that there was, during the time of my tenure in Benghazi, at one point he was out of the country. I don't recall if that was concurrent with my arrival.

Q Okay. But he was the ambassador at the time you went to Benghazi?

A Yes, he was.

Q Okay. And you had stated earlier that you, in discussions

regarding the continued U.S. presence in Benghazi, that you talked with Tripoli. Did I hear that correctly?

A Yes, ma'am.

Q Okay. Who in Tripoli did you converse with?

A Both Ambassador Stevens and the deputy chief of mission.

Q And who was that at that time?

A Greg Hicks.

Q Okay. And did you converse with anyone either back at Main State or elsewhere within the U.S. Government?

A Yes, I did.

Q Okay. And who did you speak with?

A Within the confines of this venue --

Q Uh-huh.

A -- I would like to confirm that I did and suggest that we repair to other facilities.

Q Okay. Did you communicate with anyone from the White House staff? Without specifically who.

A That may have been one of the issues for discussion in the context of a visit to Benghazi.

Q I'm sorry. I didn't follow your answer.

A That may have been discussed in the context of a visit to Benghazi.

Q I think we'll elaborate further later.

You also said that there were -- that when you came to Benghazi that it was approximately the right -- it was right sized, I believe,



is the term you used; is that correct?

A I think that we did not need an enormous presence in Benghazi. I thought there was a role to be played by a presence there. I thought that presence could be flexible. I thought it could be modest. I thought it would be closely coordinated and supplemented by visits, for example, from Tripoli.

Q Okay. And what was that size when you got there? Besides yourself, there were approximately four DS agents. Who else was employed?

A There was also an officer who was assigned as the communicator and to address the management issues as well.

Q Okay. Were there any -- and then did you have some locally-employed staff?

A We did have locally-employed staff, yes.

Q And what was the scope of the locally-employed staff?

A In addition to the support staff who were responsible, for example, for food preparation, maintenance, drivers, for example, we had local staff, one who did office management and translation, and one who was -- we would say broadly, political analyst and adviser.

Q Okay. And you also said that the February 17 QRF individuals that were assigned to the mission would go on movements with you?

A We would often -- we would always travel in convoys. Oftentimes, there would be a vehicle with QRF as part of that, yes.

Q Okay. Were you aware prior to going into Benghazi that

there had been an issue or problem with the QRF refusing to go on movements outside of the compound?

A No.

Q You were not aware of it. And that did not come up while you were there?

A It did not, to my recollection, no.

Ms. Jackson. Okay. Those are all the follow-up questions I have on your first set.

Mr. Westmoreland. Do you mind?

Ms. Clarke. I do not.

Mr. Westmoreland. Were you ever the principal officer at any of the other posts that you went to?

Mr. [REDACTED] I have been acting deputy chief of mission at post overseas. I have never served at a post which would've had a principal officer in which I served as the principal officer, no.

Mr. Westmoreland. You've mentioned that -- the Crash and Bang course --

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. -- that you took. You had never been in any environment where you needed that before?

Mr. [REDACTED] I had, in fact. I had had similar training before my assignment to Kosovo in 1989 -- in 1999, rather, that included paramedic training and defensive and offensive driving. And then immediately prior to my assignment to Benghazi, again had the Crash and Bang training. I've served in a number of posts where we received

danger pay, for example, including Kosovo and Bosnia.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. When you were in Bosnia and Kosovo and you had this training, was that because it was a conflict going on there?

Mr. [REDACTED] I was in Kosovo in 1999 at a time when there was conflict between the Albanian population and the then-Government of Serbia.

Mr. Westmoreland. So there was a conflict going on. And you mentioned that other people that may have had this training, I guess, would've been people going to Iraq, Afghanistan.

Mr. [REDACTED] Of my classmates in that course were officers who were bound for both of those posts, yes.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. And there was some activity going on there too at the time, I guess?

Mr. [REDACTED] I do seem to recall, yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. You said that when you arrived there in July that you felt like that you all were making a difference, you know, with the new government and the turnover, and you were a fair broker?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. What type of things were you trying to broker?

Mr. [REDACTED] May I offer you an example?

Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah.

Mr. [REDACTED] In the aftermath of the elections, the majority of the elected members of parliament from Benghazi met at our mission there, to discuss their views on the constitution.

Mr. Westmoreland. On what? On the constitution?

Mr. [REDACTED] On the constitution. And at that venue, we were able to discuss what were the broad outlines of what their constituents hoped to see in a constitution. I felt we were able to convey messages, and most particularly to encourage the parties on the ground to commit themselves to the legal process, first, of the elections, and then secondly, during the transition to turning towards the constitution.

Mr. Westmoreland. So, these things you were brokering, it was basically discussion between the people that were going to be involved in the new government, not between some of the groups that didn't really agree with the new government. I mean, you never -- did you ever meet with the commander of the 17th Brigade?

Mr. [REDACTED] Of February 17?

Mr. Westmoreland. Uh-huh.

Mr. [REDACTED] I did meet with [REDACTED], who was one of the leaders of February 17.

Mr. Westmoreland. Because you said they were influential, right, in the area?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. And so some of those visits that you made, were they influential enough for you to try to meet with their leadership?

Mr. [REDACTED] I tried to meet with a wide range of contacts.

Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah.

Mr. [REDACTED] I tried to meet with individuals who represented, for example, the various political parties, and additionally, from

academia, civil society, et cetera, so that we had an accurate assessment of views. And in that context, I tried to encourage all the parties to work together and to work within the context of the political process during the transition.

Mr. Westmoreland. In any of these discussions with the people in the parliament or any of the Libyan officials did -- or -- anybody discuss the building of a military for them or what they were going to do to secure their country? I mean --

Mr. [REDACTED] I recall a variety of Libyan officials discussing their priorities, to include the development of central security institutions, both internal and an Army, yes.

Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah. I mean, I would think that would be something that, you know, with a new government that you would, you know, want some military to back you up.

When you left in August, I'm sure you were aware of some of the car bombs that went off or maybe the IEDs. I'm sure you were aware of the IED at the wall before you got there. And I'm assuming that you were aware of the attack on the British Ambassador and his carpool, or whatever you want to call it.

Mr. [REDACTED] Uh-huh.

Mr. Westmoreland. When you left Benghazi at the end of August, how many other embassies or western interest were in Benghazi at the time that you left?

Mr. [REDACTED] At the time of my departure, there was a United Nations presence there, which was international. The --

Mr. Westmoreland. And were they located in Benghazi?

Mr. [REDACTED] They were located in Benghazi, yes.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

Mr. [REDACTED] We hosted at one point representatives of the U.K. Mission as they planned to reopen a presence in Benghazi. There --

Mr. Westmoreland. How long had they been closed, do you recall?

Mr. [REDACTED] I don't immediately recall, sir. There was a Maltese consul on the ground, a Turkish consul on the ground, an Egyptian consul on the ground. There was, as I recall, a French Cultural Center. There was an Italian consul, and I believe they were planning a cultural center. Some nations, including Sweden, had honorary consuls on the ground, who might, for example, have been nationals who were given honorary status, as I have seen in other posts.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did they have compounds like, you know, these, you know, the Swedes or the Maltese, did they actually have compounds where they had a envoy or a principal officer or ambassador in those facilities that you talked to?

Mr. [REDACTED] I had counterparts, certainly, within the diplomatic community on the ground. I had occasion to visit the Egyptian consulate, the Turkish consulate, as I immediately recall. And I would occasionally host meetings of international representatives on the ground so that we could share views on the state of play.

Mr. Westmoreland. And when you say consulate, what do you mean by -- I mean, was that a building or was it -- we call ours the temporary

mission facility.

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

Mr. Westmoreland. And you're calling theirs a consulate? I mean --

Mr. [REDACTED] That is what they called their facilities there, yes.

Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. Now, did they have an embassy in Tripoli also?

Mr. [REDACTED] I do not immediately know. Broadly speaking, based on previous experience, my impression has been that when one has -- when a nation has a consulate in a country, there is usually an embassy in the capital.

Mr. Westmoreland. But the British had closed theirs, the Italians had closed theirs, and I think there was some other countries that had basically closed their consulates or mission facilities or whatever in Benghazi; is that correct?

Mr. [REDACTED] There had been some flux in that. As I said, the U.K. was planning to return to Benghazi.

Mr. Westmoreland. Uh-huh. And the Red Cross had left, right? I mean, I think they had gotten bombed or something.

Mr. [REDACTED] The ICRC had suspended operations, as I recall. I do not know at the time of my departure whether they had physically left.

Mr. Westmoreland. Do you think they left because they just didn't like it or for security reasons or food was bad or, I mean --

Mr. [REDACTED] I don't want to speak for their motivations --

Mr. Westmoreland. Right.

Mr. [REDACTED] -- sir. What I can tell you is that on the basis of my contact, including with the ICRC, they were aware of the security situation and that that was likely a factor in their decisions.

Mr. Westmoreland. Did you try to assure them that it was safe there?

Mr. [REDACTED] I did not, sir. I did not feel that it was my position to give assurances along those lines to anyone.

Mr. Westmoreland. No, I'm not asking that you gave them an assurance, but did you say anything like, man, I feel great here, you know, I feel safe? You know, not trying to give them any assurance of their safety but, you know, just saying, God, I don't understand why you all are leaving, you know. We had an IED that blew a hole in our wall and we're not going anywhere. And so --

Mr. [REDACTED] I don't recall. I certainly listened to the views of others, not just in this context but more broadly --

Mr. Westmoreland. Sure.

Mr. [REDACTED] -- and it would certainly represent our view.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So, I wanted to step back just a moment. We talked about the QRF and 17 February militia. Was there also a local Guard Force present during your tenure in Benghazi?

A There was.

Q And was that the Blue Mountain Group?



A My recollection is that that was the security contractor, yes.

Q Okay. And during your time, do you recall whether there were any issues with the local Guard Force as far as absenteeism, not performing their duties?

A I don't recall any particular or pattern of problems. Certainly, the RSO staff focused on ensuring training for the local staff. Drills and so forth were quite common during my time there.

Q Now, were these trainings and drills for new hires or were they just conducted for all of the members of the local Guard Force?

A I don't know whether, if there were specific for new hires, but certainly the drills occurred at such times that it seemed to me, in my laymen's opinion, that many of the members of the staff would've been drilled on a recurring basis.

Q Was there any turnover with the local Guard Force during your time there?

A I don't recall.

Q So, we've talked about a couple of major events over in Benghazi. We talked a little bit about the national elections. We just talked a little bit about the international committee for the Red Cross suspending its operations in Benghazi. Do you recall whether -- do you recall the international committee for the Red Cross facilities being attacked near the beginning of July?

A I do recall. I do recall meeting with the resident ICRC representative in the wake of that.

Q Okay. And what do you recall about that event?

A I recall that she told me that their facility had been targeted overnight one night. I recall her expressing concern that there was a perception locally that the ICRC's focus was not on humanitarian work but rather that they had an agenda of converting the local population.

Q And had you also heard of those concerns in your discussions with any of the local population?

A Which concerns?

Q The concerns that the purpose of the ICRC was for, lack of a better term, proselytizing?

A As I recall in response to her noting that concern in subsequent meetings, I did raise that. And as I recall, local contacts did indicate to me that there were rumors in town along those lines.

Q During your meeting with the representative from the ICRC, did she discuss with you leaning towards a decision to suspend operations in Benghazi?

A I believe she did talk about suspending their operations as among the options they were considering, yes.

Q And did -- once -- when they suspended their operations, did you have any further discussions with her about the reason for their suspension?

A I don't recall the timing as to whether I spoke to her subsequent to that decision.

Q In wake of the attack on the ICRC, were there any changes

that were made at the compound regarding security?

A Certainly, I thought our awareness was heightened, certainly, in the wake of that. We tried to focus on, for example, hosting meetings rather than traveling to venues elsewhere around town.

Q Was there any concern that the facility or the compound would be attacked? Given that the attack occurred at the ICRC's facility, was there any concern that that -- that there would be an attack at the compound?

A We were certainly aware of the possibility of security incidents, potentially to include security incidents that might target the mission. We were aware of that.

Q Were you aware of a previous attack on the ICRC in Benghazi prior to your arrival?

A I don't immediately recall.

Q Another event that occurred closer to the end of July was an abduction of Iranian members. They were possibly a part of the Red Crescent; do you recall that incident?

A I do.

Q And can you describe for us what you recall about that incident?

A I recall hearing reports about that incident. I remember discussing it with members of the international community there on the ground, and I remember placing a call in which I specifically discussed that. According to the information I understood from sources, the convoy of the Iranian representatives had been stopped while transiting at night and the individuals abducted by parties unknown. That case remained open at the time of my departure from Benghazi.

Q You said that it was unknown who the parties were that were involved in this event?

A In terms of responsibility --

Q Right. Yes.

A -- for the event, I heard theories. I did not hear

definitive facts about who the perpetrators were.

Q Were there any other abductions that occurred during your time -- during your time in Benghazi of other individuals that you were aware of?

A Yes. There was a case of a dual national who was briefly detained during a visit to Benghazi, and in the context of security incidents there, abductions were possible, certainly.

Q When you say "dual national," what do you mean by that?

A As I recall, the individual was an American citizen and also a national of another country, European country. I don't specifically recall which.

Q And do you recall why she was briefly detained? What do you recall about the events involving her detention?

A I recall that she had traveled to Benghazi for a seminar or symposium. The event was interrupted by individuals who claimed to represent a local militia. She, and as I recall a local Libyan national employee of her organization were detained, taken into custody. The American -- the dual national was released some hours later. I made a wide range of calls about the incident and spoke to her directly as well.

Q You said the event was interrupted. What do you mean by that?

A I mean my understanding is that at the time the seminar was ongoing, individuals claiming to represent a local militia entered the facility and took people. Well, and detained her and, as I recall,

one Libyan national employee of her organization.

Q Do you recall the local militia that the individuals claimed to represent?

A My recollection is that she, the American dual national, identified them as claiming to represent the Rafallah al-Sahati Brigade.

Q You said you made several calls regarding this incident. Who did you call?

A I spoke to other U.S. Government employees. As I recall, I spoke to the United Nations. As I recall, I spoke to the Libyan Foreign Ministry. As I recall, I spoke to a Libyan attorney I knew with whom I had previously discussed the situation there. I don't recall the -- specifically the additional calls I made.

Q Okay. Who were the U.S. Government employees that you contacted?

A In this context, what I would say is that I would look forward to further discussion in another venue.

Q Okay. Thank you. I see that I have approximately a minute remaining in my time, and so I think this would be a good time to take a break. We can go off the record. If you would like, we can take a few minutes break and then the minority will begin their questioning.

A Okay.

[Recess.]

Mr. Kenny. You all set, sir?

Mr. [REDACTED] I am ready when you are. Thank you.

Mr. Kenny. Great. We will go back on the record. The time is 11:23. Mr. [REDACTED], I would just like to take the opportunity real briefly here to reintroduce myself. My name is Peter Kenny. I am with the minority staff. I am joined here by two of my colleagues. This is our chief counsel, Heather Sawyer as well as Brent Woolfork on the end. And just on behalf of the Select Committee minority staff, we would like to take the opportunity just to thank you again for --

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Mr. Kenny. -- being here today and thank you as well for your service to our country in the diplomatic corps. We do understand that appearing before Congress can seem to be a daunting experience, so I just want to ensure that we are going to work with you to make this as straightforward --

Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you.

Mr. Kenny. -- and simple as possible. I also understand that you and your colleagues did lose friends and fellow patriots on the night of the attack, so we just again would like to thank you for being here, and with that, I guess we can begin.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So I'd like to begin our hour just continuing the discussion that we started in the last hour.

A As you like.

Q Regarding your assignment and how you came to becoming the principal officer in Benghazi. You'd indicated that you had

volunteered for the service.

A Right.

Q And I'd just like to kind of begin by asking why you volunteered for that position and kind of what -- your understanding of what the principal officer role was in Benghazi prior to taking that position?

A Okay. I had served previously in the Middle East in the field, and in the Middle East bureau here in Washington. I was a close friend of Ambassador Stevens and with other individuals who were working on Libya and Libyan issues at that time. I had, at that time, arranged to extend my present assignment in the Department for a third year, and in connection with that, my supervisor had agreed that in the course of that third year I could do a temporary assignment overseas. I elected to volunteer for Libya as that temporary assignment and discussed it with Ambassador Stevens and others in the bureau at that time.

Libya was a particular object of interest to me, given the fact that for much of my career we did not have a diplomatic relationship with Libya. It was not a country in which one could serve, and I have ancestors who served in Libya at the time of the Italian occupation.

Q Okay. Thank you. That's very helpful. So, just to unpack that a little bit. So, you said that you had arranged to extend for a third year within the Department. So was the original arrangement for you to stay or spend a year in Libya?

A No, no, no. No, no. I was in a separate assignment.



Q Uh-huh.

A In the Department in Washington.

Q Okay.

A In the Bureau of International Organization Affairs. That was a 2-year assignment. I negotiated a 1-year extension of that assignment, and in that context, in discussions with my supervisor, asked if in the course of that third year in that job, I could take time out and do a temporary assignment overseas.

Q Okay.

A Which was the Libya assignment.

Q Okay. So you extended the 2-year tour and did a TDY --

A Correct.

Q -- to Benghazi. Okay. And you also mentioned, and this was in the last hour. I think you briefly touched on it here as well, that you had discussions with Ambassador Stevens and with some others to include Deputy Chief of Mission, Gregory Hicks.

A Correct.

Q In the course of those discussions, did either of those two individuals explain to you their sense of the mission and what the role of the U.S. presence in Benghazi was?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And what did they share with you?

A Ambassador Stevens had, of course, been in Benghazi during the revolution, had been a resident in Benghazi, for a time as well, and maintained a wide range of personal and professional contacts there

as well. In my discussions, Chris recalled that time very fondly, paid close and continuing attention to developments in Benghazi as an indicator of the mood in that part of the country during the transition. Chris told me, he encouraged me to establish a wide range of contacts to stay in close touch with Tripoli. He and I spoke or emailed fairly often, and I remained in close contact with Greg who I also knew previously following his arrival in Tripoli as DCM.

Q Okay. Did you have a sense of whether the Ambassador thought it was important for the U.S. to continue to maintain its presence in Benghazi at least during the period of your TDY?

A My sense was, that he thought it was important that we have a presence in Benghazi, that we have contacts in Benghazi, and in my discussions with him, I understood that he was in turn in discussions with Washington about the long-term disposition of a U.S. deep presence in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And did your sense of whether he viewed or felt the U.S. Mission was important, did that also carry forward beyond the elections or after the elections that continued to remain?

A Yes, that is my understanding based on conversations and -- or email exchanges we had even following the elections.

Q Okay. That's helpful. Can you maybe just take a little step back, and I think we touched on this in the last hour as well, just explain the role generally of Benghazi to the broader living society, what role they played where, you know, was it a major population center, a commercial center?

A Yes. Benghazi is the second largest city in Libya. It is the largest city in the east. Historically, eastern Libya and western Libya were separately administered, for example, during the Ottoman period. There is a rivalry between Benghazi and Tripoli, certainly, historically. During the time of the transition, there was widespread discussion of what the long-term governing arrangements for Libya would be, the extent to which there would be power sharing, devolution of authority at the local level, and what the arrangements would be for autonomy at the local or provincial level.

Benghazi was widely seen by inhabitants as the cradle of the revolution, and I thought our continuing presence was especially valued in that context, because they felt great pride in their accomplishment, and felt that we remained mindful of Benghazi's role and Benghazi's voice in Libya overall. They were also, in addition to that political aspect, broad opportunities for cultural engagement, longer term potentially for investment, in Benghazi and in the east more broadly. That's also, for example, where most of Libya's oil reserves are.

Q Okay. Now, I know - I believe you touched on this in the last hour. You discussed that you'd hosted over the course of your time in Benghazi a number of meetings with local contacts, local politicians at the Special Mission Compound. And we'd just like to get a sense of, you know, whether and why you felt it was important for the U.S. to have an actual physical presence in Benghazi to be there to meet with people as opposed to say a virtual presence?

A I thought it was very important for us to have a physical

presence there. I recall a number of local contacts, for example, who refused to go to Tripoli, which they associated very closely with the Qadhafi period. I felt it was extremely important that we maintain contact with local officials there, as well as local representatives to national parliamentary and national government as well who were from Benghazi, and particularly for us to be able to keep a very close eye on views in Benghazi during the formulation of the Libyan constitution.

Q Okay. And was that an important period in the reconstitution of the Libyan State in your view?

A In my view, it was very important.

Q Okay.

A Local contacts likened the election to a hurdle and the formulation of the constitution as the next hurdle.

Q And in order to obtain these views of the different relative parties in the constitution writing process, again, was it your understanding that -- was it your belief that having a physical presence was somehow more advantageous or superior to, for instance, just picking up the phone from Tripoli and calling contacts in Benghazi?

A In my view, in this context especially, there was no substitute for the ability to have face-to-face contact.

Q Okay. Thank you.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Just to follow up briefly. You mentioned a few times, and I think we all broadly understand, that this was a critical transitional period, and we've certainly heard, and I think understand kind of from

the perspective of the Libyans, and they voiced that with you. What, if you can help us understand as fully as we possibly can, from the United States' perspective, why was that important to us, for us to be there during that transition period?

A I felt that it was important for us to be there, as I said, both practically and symbolically to indicate that we remained attentive to developments in Libya, that we remained supportive of its peaceful transition, that we remained supportive of its territorial integrity. I thought that we provided unique, good offices among the various factions there.

For example, anecdotally, a number of Libyan contacts would contact me and ask me to then convey messages to other Libyan officials because we were uniquely positioned to do so. I think, broadly speaking, the prospect of separatism or separation of eastern Libya potentially through violent conflict, would have significant regional consequences. I think that was the driving force and rationale of our presence there.

Q And when you say "our presence there," is that -- did it encompass both the fact that certainly when possible, and the U.S. could reopen both the embassy in Tripoli it did so, but also maintain the presence in Benghazi, so is the there to encompass the fact that we had a presence in both of those locations?

A I was supportive of our continued presence in Benghazi. I felt that it was important for us to demonstrate that we were aware of local conditions, aware of local views, and that we continue to

support a peaceful process of transition to a stable representative and democratic national government there.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And just one final question on this topic before we move forward here. You now mentioned the role of the U.S. and describe it as being unique? I think you used that word a few times. I'm just wondering, given the United Nations presence there, for instance, what was the advantage the U.S. had, vis-à-vis, some of the other foreign missions that were there who could also advocate for a free and democratic Libya?

A Certainly I felt that it was useful for us to be advocating in concert with other members of the international community, and we worked hard to do that with the local diplomatic representatives with the UN as well. From my perspective and based on my contacts with Libyan officials and Libyans from all walks of lives, the role of the United States was regarded as special.

There was, for example, extraordinary interest in American culture, American products, America at large. I met many Libyans who had grown up in a period where there was no diplomatic relationship between the countries, who expressed what they described as just enormous pent up demand or curiosity about America. About America as an example, about American experience as helpful to them as they negotiated their own transition.

Q Okay. Thank you. I think we may pick up on that at a later stage just on the interest of American culture.

Okay. So, having now discussed some of the benefits of being physically present in an area to develop contacts, obtain information, and to advocate, in the last hour we talked about your ability to move throughout Benghazi to meet with local contacts. I was wondering if you could just maybe discuss whether you also had the opportunity to visit or travel around the region as well and what you may have learned through any of those trips.

A I did. I traveled from Benghazi to the city of Cyrene, which is in between Benghazi and the Libyan Egyptian border. It is the site of a originally Greek and later Roman settlement, but it's along the main highway from Benghazi to the Egyptian border.

Q Okay. And did you glean any particular insights from that trip, that journey?

A I did. I felt that traffic was -- along the highway, traffic was open. I thought there was a good bit of commercial activity which locals told me was up markedly from previous months during the conflict. I spoke with locals in Cyrene, and they pointed out to me that just as Benghazi did not wish to be dominated by Tripoli, nor did the rest of the east necessarily want Benghazi and Benghazi alone to speak for the entire region, that there was -- that there were voices and views more broadly throughout the east. So I thought that reenforced the importance of maintaining that broad range of official and unofficial contacts.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q From your perspective, you noted that commercial activity,

you felt, was on the rise. What was the significance? Was that a harbinger of improvements of a path forward, or what was the significance of seeing that kind of activity?

A I thought the visible uptick in economic activity, another example that trend would be, for example, construction in Benghazi, which had begun to resume. It indicated that goods could enter the country, were entering the country. It indicated that people had the necessary resources, for example, to make capital investments but also to buy more than just the necessities. It indicated to me that people were not necessarily dependent on international aid, that they had resources that they were able to spend for themselves, and it was to me an indicator of confidence in the future that people were being prepared to invest in businesses and other commercial activities as well.

Q And while you were there meeting with people, did issues around security, safety, concerns about either, you know, violence from militias, violence from organizations come up?

A Yes. I would say that the security situation was an important factor in the vast majority of my meetings with Libyans from all parties and from all walks of life.

Q And what was the sense that you were getting from those meetings? And I guess, in particular, the meeting that we're talking about now, we can talk about it as well more broadly, the sense that you were getting about what the primary concerns were?

A The primary concerns expressed to me were, that in the time



of the transition, that central Libyan authorities were facing great challenges in trying to develop the capability, to ensure their ability, to enforce the law, to deter violence, for example, and to take a range of militias to demobilize and to forge a coherent and a democratic and a representative security structure.

Q And did that differ -- with regard to your trips outside of Benghazi, did the sense of how people felt about it differ markedly inside Benghazi versus when you traveled outside Benghazi?

A My travel outside the city at large was limited to the trip to Cyrene. I felt that regional affiliations and tribal affiliations were a part of the equation and that often where people were from would be an important factor in their perspective. For example, one Libyan contact told me, "Of course I want everyone to demobilize. I just want to demobilize last." This was broadly echoed in the range of meetings that I had.

Q And what was your sense of the steps that were being taken to try to, I think as you put it, create a coherent democratic representative structure, how was that being worked out?

A One of the initiatives was the creation of something called the SSC, which predated my arrival in Benghazi.

Q And do you have a recollection of what those initials stood for?

A Supreme Security Council, as I recall.

Q And how was the Supreme Security Council helping to, you know, facilitate the demobilization and move to a more coherent --

A The vision --

Q -- structure? Yes.

A -- of the SSC would be that it would be temporary and transitional, it would be an umbrella, that individuals from various militias would enter the SSC, that over time they would leave the SSC, which was intended in part to provide them with job placement outside the security structure, but that it would be answerable to elected national authorities rather than to the individual lines of command within the militias themselves.

Q And how did you feel, during your time there -- you said it predated your arrival. How did you feel that process was going?

A I felt that it was moving forward fitfully. I spoke with the SSC commander in Benghazi often during my time there, as well as with other officials about their perspective on the SSC. Broadly, in my range of meetings, I would say there was a view, independent of political affiliation, that the SSC had not made enough progress quickly enough to the satisfaction of most of my contacts.

Q And from those contacts, did you get a sense of what, if anything, they were proposing to do as an alternative, like how they were proposing to improve that or if there was an alternative --

A There were funding concerns about the extent to which they could receive and rely on a funding stream from the central government. There were concerns expressed by people, that the SSC had not emerged as more than the sum of its parts, and I think practically, in the absence of what is often called a monopoly on the legitimate use of

force, that in that, it became possible for militias or criminals to take advantage of the security -- pardon me, the security situation.

Q Something that might be described as a security vacuum in some way?

A I recall others did use that term there. My observation was there were a number of players. What I recall most contacts expressing to me, was an absence of coordination, among the various players.

Q And I think we're going to get in -- in a little more depth with some of your assessments during the time, but just broadly, as we go into that, broadly speaking, did you feel over your time there that as the SSC was seeking to proceed but as you described it doing so only fitfully, and it sounds like there was, I think it's fair to say, frustration on the ground from the other parties involved in this effort to move forward, did you feel that that posed an increased risk at a security level to the Americans present in Benghazi during your time there?

A Broadly speaking, I felt that over the course of my time in Benghazi, the trend line with respect to security was of concern, in terms to the incidents that occurred. And, I can say that on the basis of my contacts there, many felt that the SSC had not deterred events and/or had not responded to them sufficiently.

Q So, I think -- that makes sense.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So I have two followups on this discussion.

A Sure.

Q So you indicated that in the course of your meetings with local contacts, that the security situation was a topic that was frequently discussed.

A Uh-huh.

Q Is that right?

A Yes, correct.

Q And I'd just like to get your sense then, that the security situation was something that the Libyans were generally aware of and this was not an issue that was, for instance, being suppressed or there was some large -- large scale denial of the security challenges in the country, was it?

A Broadly, my impression from my contacts with the Libyans was that they did not hold back about anything, and I felt that they were very candid in expressing how they felt, what they had heard, for example, on a range of issues, security among them. But I think it is -- I would say that it was very much on people's minds, and that was expressed throughout my meetings.

Q Okay. And you mentioned the SSC, in response to a question about how the Libyan Government or transitional government was attempting to work through the challenge of militias. I'd just like to get your sense of what the challenges were with having the militias disarm and bringing them into some sort of a legitimate structure, as you referred to. What were the challenges associated with disarmament?

A Based principally on my discussions with SSC officials, they felt, for example, that the absence of a reliable funding stream could leave individual members of the SSC dependent on monies that they could have received from their militias or their tribes, for example. They felt it was bad for morale, they felt that it limited their ability to provide training, to procure equipment, for example. My sense was, from talking to officials in the SSC, that they realized this was a -- not going to be an overnight resolution but that they felt that made it important to move forward with all due speed.

Q And, could you just give us maybe a sense of the numbers of persons, personnel that were -- belonged to militias, associated with militias that would have had -- needed to be demobilized and brought under to a different structure? Was it a small number? Was it a large number?

A My recollection doesn't include specific hard numbers, but certainly it seemed to me, that we're certainly talking in the thousands.

Q Okay. So again, just to summarize before going to lunch. So, it sounds like the militias were challenged, the demobilization effort was a challenge. It was not something that you could just flip a switch and do overnight but that the Libyans were attempting to at least work through the problem. Is that a fair assessment?

A I think that is a fair assessment of the climate during my time there, yes.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q And what role did the drafting of the constitution and the effort to get the constitution in place, play in that dynamic, given that one of the issues you articulated a couple of times was the funding stream --

A Yes.

Q -- in a brief from the establishment of a centralized government with a constitution.

A Yes.

Q What role did work on the constitution play?

A There was the widespread expectation among my contacts in Benghazi that the process of drafting the constitution would enumerate funding powers, among others, that it would determine, for example, whether the power to tax would be vested exclusively at the level of the central government or at the local government. Whether, for example, and there were various approaches that were raised to me by various people as to whether the localities would receive blocks of funding to apportion as they saw fit, whether there would be separate budget line items for the law enforcement agencies, the military.

There was great interest in not only the questions of the funding, but also the questions of what authorities would be local or regional, what authorities would be centralized, and the expectation broadly across the political spectrum was that the constitution would be the vehicle to resolve these issues and to establish a social contract.

Q So, moving forward, I think you used the terms of "with all

due speed."

A Uh-huh.

Q That certainly would apply to trying to get the constitution up and running, drafted, agreed to?

A Yes. I can tell you that the Libyans' official unofficial with whom I spoke looked forward to a constitution that would reflect their views. I can recall a range of Libyans telling me that they did not expect that this would be easy, but they regarded it as being vitally necessary.

Q And, you had described for us a bit in the last hour, about the U.S. role in helping facilitate that and provide resources and examples, and was it your sense that they were -- that those resources were helpful and help in the move toward getting something in place and appreciated by the folks you were working with?

A I felt that our interest, our presence, and what insights we could offer were very much appreciated by the Libyans.

Q Okay.

Mr. Kenny. So --

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Just to ask one final question before I turn it back to Peter.

And, during your time there, had the constitution gotten drafted, had these issues been resolved with the constitution, or was that still something that was a work in progress?

A That they had not been resolved, I can tell you that a number

of my contacts had been thinking about this issue, working on this issue. One contact told me he had taken the liberty of drafting a constitution, but the process to actually move forward had not yet been spelled out with specificity at the time of my departure.

Q Okay.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So just to provide a brief overview here. What I would like to do now is shift the discussion over Heather -- you know, discussion that just touched on some of your sense of the security environment and how that changed over time. And I would like to use a document. This will be the first document we use. I'll mark it as an exhibit, so it will be Exhibit 1.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And I'd just like to use this to guide our discussion about the security situation. And just for the record, this is cable 12, Tripoli 952, dated August 8, 2012, entitled, quote, "The Guns of August: security in eastern Libya," close quote. Document number is C05262779.

A I do recognize the document.

Q Okay. Would you like to take a moment to review?

A If I may, please.

Q Please.

A Thank you.



Q Yes. And you mentioned just a moment ago that you recognize this document; is that right?

A I do.

Q Do you recall who drafted this document?

A I do.

Q And then who is that?

A I drafted the first draft of this document.

Q Okay.

A It was revised at Embassy Tripoli before its transmission.

Q Okay. Do you recall the impetus for this cable or why you initiated and wrote the first draft of it?

A Yes. In light of the various incidents that we had seen, in the course of my time there, I wanted to attempt to provide context, to try to explain, not only what was happening but why, in order to encapsulate the various accounts that I had provided of individual incidents, and to try to take a step back and provide some perspective on trends and underlying reasons.

Q And was that something that was new for you in terms of products that you had prepared previously as the principal officer of Benghazi? Did this represent kind of a first attempt at doing what you just described?

A This was, I think, the first attempt to look at the issue from that perspective. We had spent a good deal of time and effort and attention to reporting on various incidents, to reporting on individual meetings, to giving our impressions and observations and

analysis, and we tried to take a similar approach as well to other issues, this focus on security. We focused additionally in our analysis on the political climate. This was consistent with that, but this was my attempt to provide my views on the security situation at a more strategic level.

Q Okay. And I will note the date of the cable is August 8.

A Yes.

Q And this is roughly a month, just over a month after the July 7 elections?

A Yes.

Q About halfway?

A Yes.

Q During your tenure there. So, you just referred to some previous reporting that you had made on earlier incidents in Benghazi. Do you recall the process by which you would report on that? Would you -- for instance, you described a process by which you sent the draft to Embassy Tripoli for review.

A Correct.

Q Did your reporting on previous incidents also follow that process?

A As I recall, in the course of my time in Benghazi, Embassy Tripoli, transitioned from what had been its practice of providing what are called OIs, or Official Informal communication to the Department towards reporting more along these lines. My practice during my time initially was to provide an update from Benghazi on a range of issues,

whatever was happening in the city that day. That would go first to Tripoli and then on to Washington from there. This was my effort to contribute to the missions reporting on issues of concern. So, this was consistent with standard practice.

Q Okay. So, those initial reports that you provided, I think you mentioned that they were daily updates; is that right?

A Yes, that's correct.

Q And so, would that be something less formal than a cable?

A These would be, roughly speaking, less formal than a stand alone cable. These would cover a range of issues, meetings that I had had, events reported in the news, et cetera. This was designed to focus on the one issue of security.

Q Okay. And so the OIs that you just referred to, would that be how Embassy Tripoli would report back information to Main State?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And so, when you mention that they had transitioned, so the movement was from these OIs? Is that a less formal process? Would that just be, for instance, an email, would it be a telephone conference?

A I don't know whether the OIs were transmitted as cables or if they were prepared and then emailed.

Q Okay.

A In addition to the reporting, there were frequent telephonic communications as well. Between me and Benghazi and Tripoli and sometimes involving Washington as well.

Q Okay. I guess maybe I'm just trying to understand this. You used the word "transition." So, I'm just trying to understand, you described an OI.

A Yes.

Q What that is, and what the process is, but it transitioned from an OI to what was the --

A To more of a focus on discreet front channel reporting --

Q Okay.

A -- on individual issue.

Q And when you say "front channel," you mean a front channel cable?

A A front channel cable, yes.

Q Okay. That's helpful. Thank you. Do you recall why that transition was taking place?

A I don't recall.

Q Okay. So, returning just to this specific cable. You mentioned that you had drafted, at least written a first draft of this cable. Do you recall -- and you sent that to Embassy Tripoli. Do you recall what the response was when you submitted that cable?

A I recall that they sent back a version which reflected their input and their edits, which I recall seeing. And then, I recall that it was transmitted as a front channel.

Q I would just ask here and to the best of your recollection, do you recall whether those edits were -- did it take a heavy editing hand? Were they light edits to this document? Does this look largely

similar to the initial draft, the first draft that you wrote?

A My recollection is that it was completely consistent with countless edits to countless other cables I had written or edited in the course of my career.

Q Okay. So, does that mean it could be any of the above?

A I would not describe the edits as having been heavy, no.

Q Okay. What I would like to do is just read a brief --

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Do you recall whether you disagreed with any of the edits?

A Foreign service officers are often accused of being sensitive as to the particular turn of phrase. I don't think I'm an extreme example of that sensitivity. I did not have any issues with the edits or the rephrasing. I did not object to the final version.

Q In terms of the substantive message that you were seeking to convey.

A I felt this accurately reflected that.

Q So, whatever edits that may have put it in language that would not have been your chosen language, you did not feel altered or --

A I did not feel that they fundamentally altered the message that I was trying to send.

Q Okay.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So, I guess to be a little bit more specific here, I would like to read just a brief portion of the cable and just ask you a few questions about that. But, before we do so, I would just like to turn

to the second page. There is a signature line and below that, a drafted by, cleared by, and approved by line. The "drafted by" is redacted here.

But is it your understanding that your name would have appeared on that line if you submitted a first draft of this cable?

A My recollection is that I was listed either as the drafter or a drafter of the cable consistent with common practice in the Department.

Q Okay. That's helpful. So, I'd just like to direct your attention, this will -- we'll just read from the -- in paragraph 1 a few sentences here from the summary, and this portion of the cable reads, quote, "Since the eve of the elections, Benghazi has moved from trepidation to euphoria and back as a series of violent incidents has dominated the political landscape during the Ramadan holiday. These incidents have varied widely in motivation and severity. There have been abductions and assassinations, but there have also been false alarms and outright fabrications. The individual incidents have been organized, but this is not an organized campaign. What we are going through and what people here are resolved to get through is a confluence rather than a conspiracy," close quote. Do you recall that particular language there?

A I do.

Q Okay. And just to follow on to Heather's question there, is that fundamentally similar to the language that you recall submitting to Embassy Tripoli?

A Yes.

Q In substance? Okay. The first sentence appears to describe an arc that takes place from trepidation before the elections to euphoria immediately after and then back, is the language here. Was it your sense that the conditions, security conditions on the ground had kind of returned to where they were around the time of the elections?

A I felt in the immediate aftermath of the elections people were very proud of the accomplishment of the conduct of the elections in spite of some of the incidents immediately beforehand. I felt that in the weeks following the election, that concerns resumed because of the variety of violent incidents.

Q Okay. And a few of those incidents I think are laid out in the cable, but could you maybe just give us a sense of what those incidents were, what the violent incidents were?

A As previously mentioned, there were incidents involving the ICRC. There was the incident of the abduction of the Iranian delegation. There were incidents where government facilities were the site of explosions. There were incidents where former officials of the Qadhafi regime were targeted for assassination. There were reports of an increase in criminal activities as well.

Q Okay.

A Car theft, carjacking, for example.

Q Okay. So, it sounds like a pretty diverse array of incidents, and I think paragraph 3 actually refers specifically to some of the independent actors. I think you touched on that, the ordinary

criminals and former regime elements.

Did you have a sense of whether Americans were being targeted in these incidents?

A My sense was that there was violence that was by Libyans, directed at other Libyans, on the basis of faction, political affiliation. I felt that there was criminal violence as well. I felt that the ICRC and the Iranian delegation had been targeted. I felt it was possible that the international community could remain a target, and within that context that we, the United States, could be targeted. I felt that it was possible that we or other internationals or Libyans themselves could be in the wrong place at the wrong time as these incidents occurred.

Q Okay. And when you say it was possible the diplomatic community could use the word remain a target, are you referring specifically to the ICRC, the seven Iranians who were abducted?

A And the U.K. ambassador.

Q And the U.K. Okay. So, you are referring back to incidents that occurred further back.

A Yes.

Q Okay. Was your sense that the -- in the last hour you mentioned some discussions you had with the ICRC representatives as well as your local contacts about some of the causes of the violence as directed at them, and you said that they were specifically targeted. You mentioned that there was this local perception or you heard of a local perception that they were somehow converting local Libyans and



proselytizing. Did you feel that the ICRC was unique in that regard? Did that cause concern among others in the diplomatic community that they may also be targeted if the ICRC was being targeted for those reasons?

A Certainly there was concern within the diplomatic community. There was wide awareness of the incident. I can recall a number of Libyan contacts telling me that the ICRC was, to some extent, unique. A number of individuals specifically noted that their symbol itself, the cross, made them stand out, but on the basis of my contacts with the international community and with other diplomats, we were aware of the possibility, as I mentioned before.

A Okay. But the ICRC was viewed as different, you said, because they were unique, was that --

A I remember a number of locals and others in the diplomatic community expressing to me that the ICRC was, because of its symbol, considered to be a special case within that broad context.

Q Okay. So, the few sentences I just read to you there, one of them refers to there -- have also been false alarms and outright fabrications. Could you just help explain for us to the best of your understanding what that is referring to?

Mr. [REDACTED] I can recall that there were incidents that were reported or rumored that we were unable to confirm in our contacts with local officials. There were also various theories as to the motivations of incidents, as well as to the facts of what had actually happened.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So was that a fairly common occurrence, reports that you were unable to corroborate or confirm during your time?

A I would say it was often the case where we were either unable to confirm that something had happened or that the reports or initial rumors were not consistent with what we subsequently heard from a range of contacts.

Q Okay. Could you just describe briefly for us the challenges that that presented in terms of reporting on the ground truths in Benghazi at the time.

A I felt it was a challenging environment. I felt that there was often very logical and legitimate reaction to initial reports. I felt it was my responsibility to try to get to ground truth in response to those, and I felt it was my responsibility to provide what confirmation or context I could on the basis of followup on the ground.

Q Okay. A few sentences ahead here it says, "Individual

incidents have been organized, but this is not an organized campaign." Just to the best of your recollection or your understanding, what did that mean?

A I felt that among the incidents there were those that were random, that were of opportunity, and I did not feel that this was a monolithic situation where there was one party responsible for the various incidents. By contrast, I felt that it reflected the presence of a number of parties and interests.

Q Okay. There's also a mention here from the last sentence that I read, it says, "What we are going through and what the people here are resolved to get through is a confluence rather than a conspiracy." It's a reference to the people here, what they're resolved to get through. What is your understanding of who is being referred to there?

A That refers to the confidence expressed by my range of local contacts that this was a phase, that even if things were perceived as getting worse, that they would get better, and that there was still faith in the prospect that a resolution of some of the underlying political issues would improve the security situation.

Q Okay. And, again, just to tie this back to our discussion about the role of the Supreme Security Council, as well as the proliferation of militias throughout Libya and the security challenges that they posed, did the views here, did they capture or encapsulate your understanding of the challenges as well?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And refer you to paragraph 4. There's a comment embedded there in a parenthetical. Reads, quote, "A surprising number of contacts here dismiss many of the recent incidents, particularly the bombs that were reportedly discovered and disarmed, as having been engineered by various security forces to discredit their rivals, to improve their own standing, and to seize prime real estate," close quote.

A Yes.

Q Is this a comment that you inserted into the cable?

A Yes, that is.

Q Okay. So this is your language here?

A Correct.

Q Okay. Can you explain just a little bit what this means?

A In the aftermath of a number of incidents in pulsing the system, in talking to local contacts, a number of them were of the view that the incidents as reported had, in fact, been engineered to cast certain parties in a favorable light, that they had averted an incident or diffused a bomb, for example. A number of Libyan contacts told me that, in their opinion, what was part of this issue was jockeying for economic advantage or real estate, for example, and that that was part of this broader security equation as well.

Q And we're nearing the end of our hour, but I'd like to just conclude with one final question. You had mentioned a moment ago that it had been reported to you or that your Libyan local contacts had told you that they had a sense that security conditions would in time get

better. I would just like to ask, did you, at least in part, share their optimism?

A I was very impressed by the optimism of so many of the Libyans with whom I spoke. And I felt that that optimism and that that faith in the future was a great asset to them. I felt that they were focusing, rightly, on the constitutional process as a way to address the underlying issues. I felt that there was a limited time in which to make that progress.

Q Thank you.

Mr. Kenny. We'll go off the record.

[Recess.]

Ms. Clarke. Go back on the record. And it's approximately 1:19.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Mr. [REDACTED], I have just some followup questions from the previous hour that we'll start with.

A Please.

Q One thing that you talked about was that meetings, often meetings with members of the local -- local members of Benghazi, leaders, et cetera. During those meetings was a translator present, or how did you communicate with those individuals?

A It varied on their level of English-language fluency. Those who spoke English at a professional level, I would often conduct meetings with them face to face without translation. If that was not an option, I would rely on local staff to provide translation services from English to Arabic.

Q And was it just one particular individual of the local staff that would provide the translation, or did you rely on several individuals?

A I had occasion to rely on two of the local staff for translation at various times.

Ms. Jackson. And who were they?

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Who were those individuals?

A I understand their names have been -- I have seen their names. [REDACTED], who was responsible for office management, and [REDACTED], who was our political analyst.

Q Did you rely on one more than the other?

A [REDACTED] probably translated in more of my meetings than [REDACTED] did.

Q And were these meetings that occurred on or off compound?

A On compound. I should add, this did not reflect lack of confidence in one or the other. This was merely a matter of scheduling.

Q Okay. And what about off compound, if you needed a translator, who would you use?

A I don't immediately recall an off-compound meeting where we needed translation. I can recall meetings with groups where my view was some of the members of the Libyan party might speak English better than others and that they might translate within or among themselves.

Q Okay. In the previous hour, we also -- you also touched on the British coming back to Benghazi, or considering bringing their presence back to Benghazi.

A Correct.

Q When were they proposing to come back to Benghazi?

A I don't remember when it was that they sent a team out to Benghazi. I recall meeting with them. We had them to dinner at the compound. We had stored some of their equipment on our compound,

including their vehicles. I don't remember if they had attached a target date to a prospective return to Benghazi.

Q And why did the team come to Benghazi? Were they gathering information about their proposal to reopen their presence in Benghazi?

A I understood that this was in the context of their taking a look at reopening on site, yes.

Q And did you have an understanding of what their security posture would be once they reopened?

A I don't recall going into that level of detail with them. We spoke generally about my impressions of the situation there based on my contacts with locals.

Q And what did you relay to them about your impressions of the situation?

A I recall telling them about the incidents that had occurred around the time of their visit. I apologize, I don't recall exactly when that was. But whatever would have happened in that immediate timeframe probably would've been the basis for our discussion.

Q Do you recall whether their visit occurred closer to your arrival in Benghazi, during the middle of your time in Benghazi, or closer to?

A I would be speculating in this, so, no, I don't recall.

Q Did you have any discussion with them about not necessarily their security posture, but were they intending to reopen in the same facility that they had used before, or were they intending to have a smaller presence?



A I don't recall them discussing in detail numbers or location.

Q Okay. And once your tenure ended in Benghazi, had the British actually come back to Benghazi and reopened a location?

A At the time of my departure, they had not.

Q Okay. You also talked about some of your travel outside of Benghazi. You mentioned that you only traveled to Cyrene. Is that correct?

A That is my recollection, yes.

Q Was there a reason why you didn't travel to other cities outside of Benghazi, such as Derna?

A Broadly speaking, Benghazi as the greatest population center was where most of the people were. During Ramadan, many people left the city on vacation. Some of my contacts even left the country. But even during Ramadan, I felt there were more people to see in the city than outside. And I had the opportunity occasionally to talk to people in Benghazi who had family or contacts or had recently visited other areas of the east as well.

Q Did the U.N. or any organization prohibit travel to Derna during your time?

A I recall that during my time there was an incident involving the U.N. in Derna. In the aftermath of that incident, I recall that they restricted travel there.

Q And was that restriction to individuals associated with the U.N. or did they disseminate the information to other Western entities?

A Their restriction governed their personnel, as I recall. Certainly communication within the diplomatic community was such that they shared that information, as we did share information on a wide range of issues.

Q Do you recall what incident occurred in Derna?

A I recall that it was an incident involving one or more of their vehicles transiting through Derna. But I don't remember more specifically what the nature of the incident was.

Q Was it some type of attack on their vehicles?

A I'm sorry. I simply -- I don't recall the specifics of the information. I recall talking to one of the U.N. reps in the aftermath during which they told me that they had restricted travel in the aftermath.

Q Also, we have previously talked about the SSC, and you mentioned that part of its role, I think, you said was to help the individuals that would come from the militias into the SSC, to help them gain employment.

A Uh-huh.

Q Where were those employment opportunities going to be?

A The intention was that this would be a mechanism to help people transition into other opportunities, for example, in the private sector. This was designed to help the process of demobilization and an interim step back into civilian employment.

Q Were there jobs in the private sector available to them at the time?

A Based on my contacts with people who were in business, investors, they expressed the view that there were economic opportunities there, for example, in construction potentially. My sense was that the people who knew the economy best felt that there were employment opportunities, yes.

Q Were any of those employment opportunities going to be with any type of security element for the Libyan Government, such as the military or local government, such as the police?

A I think that was consistent. I think that the function of the SSC was envisioned such that it would help people transition into the private sector, for example, to find employment, but that there would be some who would remain part of a national security structure that would be representative and democratic and consistent with international standards.

Q You mentioned that you met with the commander of the SSC several times. Was he based in Benghazi?

A I met with him in Benghazi. I spoke to him by phone as well. I don't know exactly where he was. I recall he was originally from Benghazi. I don't know if he was exclusively residing there.

Q In the discussion in the last hour you described the efforts of the SSC as moving forward fitfully. Can you elaborate on what you meant by that?

A I felt, and it was the view of those with whom I spoke, including SSC officials themselves, that the SSC was not making progress as quickly as had been hoped, either in terms of facilitating

demobilization or of deterring violent incidents.

Q Turning to Exhibit 1 that we had in the last hour, we were discussing this in the last hour, in the paragraph 3 you talk about the -- well, this cable talks about, "The absence of significant deterrence has contributed to a security vacuum that is being exploited by independent actors." Can you describe who those independent actors were?

A I felt that there were a range of actors and factors at that time, to include individual militias, to include criminal elements, to include former regime elements as well.

Q And elaborate, what do you mean by criminal elements?

A There were a number of incidents, car theft, carjackings, for example, that most of the people I spoke to regarded as having been motivated by profit, as a criminal enterprise, not motivated as a political statement, not specifically targeting a person because of their position or their politics, but simply because they may have happened to drive a nice car. I felt this was part of the broader equation.

Q And did you feel that this security vacuum presented an opportunity for groups that may have been considered Islamist extremists to gain a foothold?

A I felt that the absence of definitive authorities and the absence of a security environment that was sufficiently stable, that a range of actors could exploit the situation, to include those who were on the extreme spectrum.

Q Was there anything in your meetings with individuals or in your observation that led you to that conclusion?

A That was expressed to me by a range of Libyan contacts. Many Libyan contacts expressed to me their view that in the absence of progress with respect to the security situation that there could be a space for exploitation by extremists, both extremist Islamists, extremist federalists or separatists, as well as former regime elements.

Q During the last hour you also -- and correct me if I'm repeating your words incorrectly -- you said that you were concerned about the trendline with respect to the security situation?

A I noted the trendline over the course of my time there with respect to the security situation, yes.

Q And what did you note about that trendline?

A I felt that the number of security-related incidents, the frequency of those incidents, and the scale of the incidents were on the rise.

Q Did you relay that concern to individuals back at the Embassy in Tripoli?

A I made my views known to Tripoli, yes.

Q And generally how would you make those views known?

A I provided daily updates to Tripoli, as well as stand-alone messages, and in telephonic conversations as well.

Q Do you feel that your message was received or heard and that they were taking into consideration the information you were providing?

A I felt that my views were heard. I felt that they were taken into account. And I felt that those with whom I spoke in Tripoli were aware of my perspective based on my time there, yes.

Q Did you or were you aware if someone in Tripoli relayed your concerns back to Washington?

A Well, I think I would regard the transmission of the cable as one of the ways where I felt that my views were, in fact, conveyed back to Washington. My daily updates as well to Tripoli were also conveyed back to Washington as well.

Q Because of your view that the trendline was increasing in the frequency and severity of the security incidents, were there any changes or any additional requests that were made for the compound for security or for how movements were conducted?

A We certainly evaluated the security situation on an ongoing basis. There were instances, for example, where in light of incidents we would elect to host a meeting rather than visit the interlocutor. There were instances where we might decide not to venture outside the compound or to do so by a different route than we might otherwise, based on what was going on in and around town. So that was certainly a factor in how we did what we did.

Q I believe in the last hour you also mentioned, or it might have been brought up from this cable, that there was a feeling that the SSC had not responded sufficiently to security incidents. Can you explain what that concern was?

A A number of my Libyan contacts felt that the SSC in the

aftermath of individual incidents had not demonstrated its ability to investigate, to make arrests, for example, to identify those responsible, and to pursue the case. My contacts, by and large, expressed the view that the SSC's capabilities were limited.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Can I ask how that worked? I mean, did the SSC, was it a local police force? You described it as sort of an umbrella of militias. So did they, like, task out to certain militias doing X investigation and another militia gets Y investigation, or did they have a more formalized police department, such as a detectives unit and street patrols? Just how was the SSC configured?

A It was a hybrid and to some extent it was a work in progress. It was envisioned that individuals would join the SSC rather than units, rather than militias en masse. And my understanding, from individuals including those within the SSC, was this was intended to establish loyalty to the SSC as opposed to faction, tribe, militia, et cetera.

Because of widespread concerns about former regime elements, especially in the security services, a number of my Libyan contacts told me that there were concerns about the experience and the capacity of the SSC, that those with experience from before the revolution were discredited and disqualified because of their affiliation with the Qadhafi regime, and that those in the SSC may have lacked the professional training or experience to provide, for example, the investigative services that we associate with a robust and professional police service.

It was often described to me as a work in progress. I don't have particular visibility on how, for example, specific taskings were made as opposed to whether they were individual or to a local precinct, or what have you. But what I can tell you is that the perception by and large among the Libyans with whom I spoke was that there were questions regarding the SSC's capability to either deter incidents or to investigate them in their aftermath.

Q During your time there did they have any type of judicial process, such as were there arrests, were there prosecutions, were there judges, even on the lower level for the criminal element, for carjackings and robberies and other type of more everyday-type crime?

A Yes, there was a judicial system. There was both a civil judicial system and there was also a military judicial system. This was in part a remnant of the former regime, where, as was explained to me by Libyan attorneys, many crimes we would consider to be civil were tried in military channels in Libya.

The courts were up. The courts were running. Libyans expressed to me their view that arrests were not being -- that perhaps arrests were not being made. But there was a functioning court system. My view was, based on what Libyan contacts told me, that that was regarded as functional, but perhaps ultimately that too would need to be examined and reformed.

Q Okay.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q So in the last hour we also were talking about that the



Libyans felt that there was optimism regarding the security situation improving.

A I feel that my Libyan contacts expressed to me their general confidence about the future overall, specifically about the importance of making progress to resolve many of the political issues, and that they felt that in turn those would help address the security situation, yes.

Q Okay. And I believe you said that you felt that there was a limited time to progress towards that goal. Why did you feel that there was a limited time? Or can you elaborate more on what you meant by a limited time to progress towards that goal?

A I felt that there was a window of opportunity in the wake of the elections for the new government to demonstrate progress. I felt that the optimism among the Libyans with whom I met was not infinite and it would not be indefinite and that, by and large, they felt that there needed to be visible and credible progress politically in order for that optimism to be maintained and to be validated in fact.

Q And what would have happened if there wasn't visible and credible progress before that window of opportunity closed?

A Based on my contacts with Libyan officials, they felt that it could have a number of consequences, that it could reinforce extremist tendencies, that it could reinforce interest in separatism in Benghazi in the east, and they felt that the absence of development of an effective and representative government could also give rise to increased criminal activity to and through Libya.

Q Is separatism the same thing as federalism or is that something entirely different?

A The two are closely related and often synonymous based on my experience in the Libyan context. I felt that the vast majority of my contacts in Benghazi felt that there had to be an arrangement where the regions felt that they were involved in governance. There were some who regarded the only option for this as separation of the individual regions. There were many others, I thought more, who felt that there could be a federalist solution where powers could be shared between a federal and regional authorities. This was a frequent topic of conversation.

Q When you say regions, are you referring to eastern and western Benghazi, or were there more regions?

A Libya historically has three distinct regions: east, west, and south. The east, and Benghazi in particular within the east, is generally regarded as the voice of that sentiment.

Q And what was the U.S. interest? Was the U.S. interested in maintaining one single government or was it supportive of federalism or separatism?

A We were supportive of all Libyans participating in a peaceful political process that addressed the concerns of the public. We were concerned about the territorial integrity of Libya. We were concerned about the consequences of failure to reach such an accommodation. And I personally encouraged all Libyans to dedicate themselves to the peaceful resolution of that in a wide range of my

meetings with a wide range of my contacts.

Q What do you mean by concern with territorial integrity?

A Broadly speaking, attempts to redraw borders or attempts to divide the country.

Q And was that a concern that would have -- for instance, individuals that supported federalism, was that one of the things that they wanted to accomplish?

A That was often part of their rhetoric, reference to outright independence or division of the country. Equally, there were elements within the federalist camp who indicated to me that they were prepared to discuss governing arrangements and that their bottom line was less than independence but rather representation of their views and some governing authorities at local levels.

Q And we talked a little bit about the elections that occurred in July. Can you explain kind of how the governing structure was going to be set up, as far as, I think it was called the General National Congress. Is that correct?

A There was both the GNC and the NTC, yes.

Q Okay. And the NTC was the transitional government, correct?

A National Transitional Council, yes.

Q And then following the election, it became -- the election was to elect individuals to the GNC?

A That is my recollection, yes.

Q And so what type of representation would Benghazi, for

example, have in the GNC?

A The arrangements for the election specifically and then the governing bodies that would be determined by the election predate my arrival, so I'll, with the caveat that I will confine myself to my impressions and what I heard before, during, and after the elections, was that the elections were to elect representatives to the GNC based on population-based apportionment of seats. That those representatives would constitute a legislative body. Drawn from that body would be the prime minister and the other government ministers. And that during the tenure of the GNC there would be a process regarding the drafting of a new constitution.

Q The GNC wasn't a permanent solution?

A The GNC was to be elected for a set term.

Q Okay.

A The constitution was to have determined longer-term arrangements regarding governance. The expectation of the Libyans with whom I spoke were that there would remain under a new constitution an elected legislative branch within the new governing structures.

Q During the last hour part of the discussion you talked about that you felt that the international community, the attack on the ICRC and some of the other attacks were targeted, and that you felt that the international community would remain a target. Can you explain why you felt that the international community would remain a target?

A I felt that there remained the possibility that internationals in Benghazi could be the targets, could be incidentally

in the wrong place at the wrong time in the context of other incidents. I felt in the context of criminal activity that it would be possible for internationals, for example, to have their cars stolen or carjackings by criminal elements. I felt we could be in or around Benghazi at a time when there were incidents involving Libyan parties, and I felt that there was the possibility that extremist elements might seek to target the international community.

Q What made you think that there was that possibility?

A Based on my observations on the ground, based on my contacts with Libyan officials, and Libyans in all walks of life, there was concern expressed that the international community, and the United States within the international community, could be targeted because of the great symbolic impact of such attacks or if our policies were considered to be inimical to their views.

Q You mentioned earlier that in general you felt that, to paraphrase, that the Libyans were welcoming of the U.S. presence.

A Yes.

Q And how did that general concept of how Libyans felt about the U.S. presence square with your concern that there was a possibility that the U.S. could, as a member of the international community, could be attacked?

A I did feel that the vast majority of those in Benghazi, on the basis of my contacts across their political spectrum and beyond the political realm, appreciated and valued our presence. I felt that we were welcome there.

I felt at the same time that it would take but a small, violent extremist element to undertake attacks, contrary to what I felt was a public mood that was very welcoming and very appreciative of our presence there.

Q And during your time there did you feel that a small, extremist element had the resources to undertake an attack that would cause harm to the facility or cause harm to the international community, and especially to U.S. individuals who were present?

A I felt, based on the security context, based on the incidents that occurred during my time there, that that was possible.

Ms. Jackson. So did you see a coalescing of the extremist element or, I guess, are you saying that you saw them grow in fervor or dedication to not having Libya be a democracy?

Mr. [REDACTED] I felt that the situation was centrifugal, not centripetal. I thought that events were on a line where they could allow elements to become more extreme if they did not see the progress or the political accommodation.

I would not describe it as coalescence. I did not view it as parties coming together into a coherent opposition, quite to the contrary. I thought what could happen was further division and entrenchment of division and differences of opinion.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q Stepping back momentarily to the SSC, you were asked about the numbers of individuals that needed to be demobilized, and I think you said that there were thousands.

A My recollection, broadly speaking, was that we were talking numbers in the thousands, yes.

Q Do you recall whether that was more or less than 10,000? More or less than 20,000?

A I don't recall. Benghazi was itself part of a national issue of demobilization. I don't recall the scale other than to say that we were talking, specific to Benghazi, in the thousands. Beyond that, more specifically, or beyond that nationally, I simply don't know.

Q We also talked about, in our previous hour, we discussed that you felt that the size of the mission was about where it should be for a continued presence?

A I felt that we could be effective with a modest presence that would have the flexibility to be supplemented, for example, by visits by subject matter experts in particular areas. I did not think that an extremely large presence would be necessary or even necessarily constructive.

Q How did that relate to your feelings about the actual compound in which the mission was housed? Did you feel that the size of the compound itself was sufficient, was too large, too small?

A I felt the size of the compound was certainly adequate in terms of its physical area, and I felt that in the context of discussions regarding the long-term disposition of our presence there, that the property might have utility. And I would be happy to discuss that in further detail in another forum.

Q At the beginning of our time with you, you mentioned that you had some discussions with your predecessor, [REDACTED], in D.C.

A Yes.

Q Can you describe a little bit more about what those discussions consisted of, and were there any other individuals that were present during those discussions?

A There were not any other individuals present. [REDACTED] and I had lunch 1 day near the Department. We talked about the whole gamut of issues, what her experiences and perceptions were. I always make an effort to talk to my immediate predecessor when going into a new position. I find that in general very valuable. I appreciated my discussion with [REDACTED] as well.

Q During your time in Benghazi, did the Ambassador have opportunity to visit Benghazi?

A He did not visit Benghazi during my time there.

Q Did you have an opportunity to visit Tripoli during your time in Benghazi?

A When I departed Libya I traveled from Benghazi to Tripoli. I spent a day at the Embassy there and then I departed from Tripoli.

Q At some point during your tenure did the Ambassador plan to come to Benghazi during the time that you were going to be there?

A As I recall, yes. He did plan on visiting Benghazi, but did not make the trip during my tenure.

Q And do you recall the reasons why he did not make that trip?



A I remember talking to him and emailing with him about the trip. I remember him conveying that he couldn't do it at that time but looked forward to doing it at a future date that would work for him.

Q And prior to you leaving Benghazi had a future date been set for his visit to Benghazi?

A We were talking about him making the trip within a week or two after my departure.

Q When you traveled to Tripoli after leaving Benghazi, did you have a discussion with the Ambassador about his trip?

A The Ambassador was not in Libya at the time I transited through Tripoli.

Q Did you have a discussion with the DCM about his trip?

A I spoke to the DCM about a wide range of issues. I don't recall if we specifically discussed the Ambassador's trip in that context.

Q Do you ever recall if you were involved in any discussions about shortening the length of the Ambassador's trip to Benghazi?

A I recall that we discussed how he would spend time in Benghazi, with whom he would meet, for example. My recollection was that we were talking about a shorter rather than a longer duration in terms of his stay there.

Q And why was there discussion for a shorter rather than longer duration?

A Certainly, there was a lot going on in the country overall

at that time. I didn't want to take Chris away from his duties in Tripoli for a prolonged period of time. And I felt that in order to achieve his priorities he could do so in a reasonably brief visit.

Q And can you detail what some of those priorities for his trip to Benghazi were?

A I thought it would be very helpful for Chris, given his previous time in Benghazi and his continuing contacts there, if he were to meet with some of the newly elected officials. I recall that I encouraged him to meet with the Municipal Council, for example. I recall that we talked about how he could effectively engage in public diplomacy, as well.

Overall, I recall saying that I thought his engagement could be very helpful in underscoring the need for all parties on the ground to commit themselves to the political process.

Q Those were some of my followup questions, which took a majority of my time. And so I wanted to return back to where we left off in our questioning --

A As you like.

Q -- discussing some of the incidents that occurred in Benghazi during your tenure. I think the last thing that we discussed was the Iranian individuals that had been abducted. You mentioned that there that individuals felt that this SSC didn't respond appropriately to events. And I wanted to ask you, there were incidences other than these individuals where there were individuals who were abducted. Did the SSC play any role in helping those individuals, such as the woman

that we discussed earlier who was detained, or even these individuals, help -- I guess the word I'm looking for is free those individuals -- or was that something that happened between yourself or other members of the other Western countries in ensuring that those individuals were set free?

A What I recall about the specific incident regarding the American dual national was that we engaged with a very wide range of Libyan officials to deliver a consistent message to them. I don't have any insight as to what if any communication or interaction there was between or among the Libyan officials, but I do know that she was released that day. I do not know what happened behind the curtain.

Q Do you recall an incident involving the Sudanese consul?

A I do, yes.

Q And what do you recall about that incident?

A I recall that his vehicle was carjacked.

Q And was anyone apprehended for -- anyone arrested for that incident? Was there any further information that was provided other than the fact that his vehicle was carjacked?

A At the time of my departure, I don't believe that any arrests had been made.

Q Okay. Do you recall during your time in Benghazi -- this may have occurred over several weeks -- but a general evacuation of the Tibesti Hotel due to protests?

A I recall hearing about an incident at the Tibesti Hotel. I do seem to recall, yes, that there was an evacuation of the hotel.

Q And were there Western entities that were present at the hotel, at the Tibesti Hotel during your time there?

A I recall that Westerners had stayed at the Tibesti Hotel. I recall that the Tibesti was also used by some other countries' officials in Benghazi as well.

So I would say that Westerners had stayed there. I simply don't recall if any were staying there at that time congruent with the incident.

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Do you recall that right before you left, and I believe this occurred on August 29, that the Libyan Government had issued a maximum state of alert countrywide?

A I remember press coverage of that. I remember being in communication with Embassy Tripoli about that. And I remember that in spite of our contacts in Benghazi, that we were unable to find a Libyan official who was aware of this declaration from Tripoli.

Q Had your counterparts in Tripoli, though, heard or received some sort of official notice from the Libyan Government in Tripoli that this maximum state of alert had been issued?

A I recall that what Tripoli conveyed to me was a media report.

Q Okay.

A I would add, as the son of a journalist, that that does not necessarily make it true.

Q We may have to release that part of the transcript to his father or mother, which is the one who's the journalist. I'm sorry,

but.

Was there any -- the media report, did it refer to any event that had either -- event or events that had occurred in the past or was upcoming that caused or purportedly caused this maximum state of alert? I mean, was there a date, was, like, September 1 an important date in Libyan history for military or revolutionary things, or was it a culmination of these security incidents? Or at least from the press reporting, what was attributed to this maximum state of alert?

A I recall that it occurred in the context of, as we previously discussed, the trendline. September 1 is the anniversary of the Qadhafi revolution, and I seem to recall that the media coverage did make reference to that.

Q To both the trendline of security incidents and the Qadhafi revolution or --

A To the latter, to the upcoming anniversary.

Q Okay. All right. When you arrived in Tripoli and met with the DCM did you have any discussions with the DCM about this maximum state of alert?

A I don't recall if that was one of the issues we discussed. Certainly we discussed the security situation in the context of our discussions overall.

Q And was there any discussion between you and the DCM about suspending movements from either Embassy Tripoli or any movements in Benghazi because of that?

A There was to be a gap between my departure and the arrival

of the next principal officer. In my absence, I don't know what, if any, movements were planned. Certainly during my time there we took all security-related factors into account in determining what to do and how to do it. It would certainly be consistent with that to be aware of and to factor that in.

Q Was there any discussion between yourself and the DCM or yourself and others regarding canceling the Ambassador's upcoming trip?

A I remember we talked about what the -- what the timing of the trip should be both in the context of, who would be in Benghazi so that we could have a productive session, but certainly the security situation is a factor. It was a factor in my decisions, and certainly I wanted to make sure that the embassy in Tripoli was aware of my perspective as it made its decisions.

Q Did you make any recommendations that the Ambassador's trip should be shortened, postponed, or canceled?

A As I recall, our discussions were about a short trip, shorter rather than being on the longer side.

Q Okay, did you make a specific recommendation?

A I don't recall if I suggested that it be X number of days or hours. I recall that I was thinking shorter rather than longer.

Q So, perhaps -- do you recall if it was a recommendation that it just be a day long trip, in the morning, out at the end of the day?

A I don't recall that specifically.

Ms. Clarke. I think those are all the questions that we have for you in this setting, and so at this time we can go off the record, and

if you would like, we can take a break or --

A Sure.

[Recess.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Go back on the record. The time is 2:25. And again, Mr. [REDACTED], thank you again for your patience today. We are at the early afternoon here, and we'll try to work through some of these issues as quickly as possible with you.

A As you like.

Q In the course of discussion over the last hour, we had a discussion of some specific security incidents as well as kind of your assessment of the overall security environment in Libya. I was wondering if at least the beginning of our hour here we can take maybe a little bit of a step back, and I know there was a discussion about your stopover in Tripoli as you were transiting out of Libya.

A Uh-huh.

Q I'd like to focus kind of on the latter part of that August period during your waning days in Libya, and just to kind of assist our discussion here, we would like to go ahead and enter -- this will be Exhibit No. 2.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And just to briefly describe this document, this is an email from you to [REDACTED] dated August 29, 2012. The subject is



"Benghazi handoff notes" And the document number is C05390852. I can give you a moment just to refresh it. I'm going to direct your attention just to a few key parts beginning on the bottom of the second page, but if you would like to review the full document, I can certainly afford you that opportunity.

Okay. So, I would just like to point out for the record there is a section on security here. We can return to that.

A Okay.

Q We've had an extensive conversation about that today. We'd just like to direct your attention, though, to the second page, and just again to begin, there is a life services section here. And it discusses some of the services on whom you relied, and I know there was a discussion in one of the earlier rounds about the role of local staff at the compound.

And just so we can better understand what life was like on the compound during your time there. I know that there is a mention here of a serious morale issue. If you could just, you know, maybe, you know, help us understand some of these issues, some of these concerns?

A Sure. Undiplomatically put, the food was terrible. It was monotonous in the extreme. I found it to be suspect in origin and definition, and it was an easy decision to fast for Ramadan. We did, over the course of time, manage to effect some positive change, drawing on the kind services of other agencies who were able to provide some very welcome tutorials to our local cook, and I thought that that resulted in some improvement as well.

I would describe daily life, as often being rather monotonous, especially during Ramadan when the general pace of activity slowed perceptibly among the local community.

I thought it was very important to be attentive to morale. I think we did our best to keep our spirits up and to make things funny rather than tragic, during our time there, and again, these are administrative questions that were all part of a broader discussion about the ultimate nature of an American presence in Benghazi.

Q Okay. And just to better understand and returning to the top of the document, so again, you had written this to [REDACTED], and just for the purpose of the record, who is he?

A Mr. [REDACTED] was then assigned as the political counselor at the embassy in Tripoli, and he was to come out to Benghazi on an interim basis following my departure and prior to the arrival of the next principal officer.

Q Okay. And when the subject here says, "handoff notes," this was a document that you prepared to assist him --

A Yes.

Q -- in that transition period?

A Precisely.

Q Okay. And, in this document you would have raised issues that you thought were important for him to know before arriving at post?

A Precisely.

Q Okay. And the tragic comic who, to borrow from your language, being one of those?

A Indeed.

Q Okay. I would like to just draw your attention now to a little bit lower on that second page under the section heading "Upcoming Visits"?

A Uh-huh.

Q And there is a reference here to the Ambassador's visit. And we talked a little bit about that in the last hour. We may return to that in this hour as well. But, I would like to direct your attention to the second sentence here which appears to refer to a different trip.

And could you just explain to us what your understanding of what this event was?

A The reference being to that we're also likely to have the Boston Boys' Choir in town in September?

Q Yes.

A My recollection is that there were limited cultural events being planned in Libya by the P.D. section, public diplomacy section of the embassy in Tripoli. I had discussed with the embassy the importance of including Benghazi in such opportunities, just as we had discussed the importance of ensuring that people, students, for example, from Benghazi were included in opportunities to attend events, to go to the United States, et cetera, et cetera, so that we would have truly national coverage there.

As I recall, one of the trips that was coming up was of the Boston Boys' Choir and we had discussed them adding a Benghazi event to their schedule.

Q Okay. And you'd mentioned that this was part of some sort of public diplomacy outreach that was organized by the embassy; is that correct?

A Yes. That's my recollection.

Q So this is being coordinated, initiated by Embassy Tripoli; is that --

A That's my recollection also.

Q Okay. And in the course of doing so, they would have reached out to you at post to ask for your thoughts on the matter; is that right?

A We were in open communication, as I recall. I heard about this from them, yes.

Q Okay. And perhaps this will help with your recollection as well.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q And admittedly, Peter is indulging me with this exhibit because it made me smile when I came across it.

A I see.

Q And I thought it might also make you smile to recall what at least appears to be planning for a more, I would say, fun --

A Okay.

Q -- an actually fun event. But -- so he is a little bit indulging me too.

A Okay.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So we will mark this as Exhibit 3.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So, this is an email from you to [REDACTED] dated August 26, 2012, and the subject is "Re: American Music Abroad, Boston Boys in Libya, Fall 2012."

A Uh-huh.

Q I'll just give you a moment to review.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And just to direct your attention to the top of the page here. So, [REDACTED], and I hope I am pronouncing his name correctly. We'll help our court reporter with the spelling as well. Sends an email to you on August 26, same day, and says in the email, quote, "[REDACTED], do you think a band program is something that Benghazi could handle in November from security logistic or other perspectives? Of course we would come out to help. I need to give these guys an answer soon," close quote.

Same day you responded, quote, "We could definitely do it. I'm sure the university would give us space if necessary, and if we wanted to go big time, we could try at the theater at Cyrene", close quote.

And again just to tie this -- tie it back to our discussions about security, tie it back to your discussion about the outreach efforts, the public diplomacy as well as the optimism of letting people, you even referred to their appetite for American cultural products. Could

you just explain for us -- help us understand --

A Sure.

Q -- here, you know, your approval of this effort?

A I thought -- well, I would say that I approved of this effort conceptually, in that, I felt it was very important and this was an issue that was raised with me repeatedly and at times pointedly by Libyan contacts, that they attach great value to being included in events that we were sponsoring ranging from cultural opportunities to academic exchanges, training programs, et cetera. This was consistent to the sensitivities of Benghazi that it receive a voice in -- in the affairs of Libya.

In response to this, I thought that this would be very welcome. As I mentioned, I thought the university would be a very logical partner for us in this regard. I had spoken to a number of academics, largely about the importance they attached to being part of our cultural programming, consistent with the great interest that many Libyans expressed in America and things American.

I would say that with this as with any other event, that we would always remain aware of the security situation, and if we felt that circumstances on the ground were in any way inappropriate, we would not move forward.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So, just a couple of followup questions.

A Please.

Q Because part of why, when I said I -- made me smile was, you know, one of the things that's hard for the committee to understand and what we're all, I think, grappling very hard to understand, is what I think you've tried to capture a little for us today when you were talking about kind of what optimism existed and excitement about certain things. And this, to me, was an example of something that seemed, you know, certainly more fun, had certainly it's valuable cultural, connectivity purposes, but it seemed to capture to me a little bit statement of the dynamic of kind of potentially for someone on the ground, being in Benghazi and both understanding and keeping a clear eye on security.

But it did to me exhibit a certain sense of optimism that certainly if the planning was for November, that it would be possible to have this kind of a trip. Not that you would ignore what the situation was in this November, but there was a certain sense of optimism and a desire to keep doing really valuable work.

Can you share with us, you know, what that feeling was, what that dynamic was for you?

A Yes.

Q And if that's accurate in any way?

A Yes. Broadly, I think it is. And certainly I don't want to leave the impression that although security was a great concern, it was not the only issue. And security incidents were not the only events that occurred in Benghazi.

And in addition to my meetings that focused especially on that,

I had meetings that discussed potential investments, the construction sector, the oil sector, the new school year, and reforms of the educational system, opportunities for Libyan students to go and study in the United States. I felt it was very important for us to be responsive to this great demand.

I thought that it was best for us to plan for the prospect and have to adjust, if necessary, rather than not plan and presume that the worst contingency would in fact happen. And I felt that to the extent that we were able, to remain engaged, that we could not only respond to that sense of welcomeness but that we could in fact encourage it and promote it.

Q And so certainly, you know, as of, even toward the end of your tenure there and despite what you had done in terms of the planning, you said you certainly want to make sure that the United States was planning for the contingency, you also, at the same time, as this would exhibit, were in a forward looking way, trying to help plan to continue doing the really other core diplomatic work, and you still felt that was a valuable and a viable role and opportunity for the United States?

A I thought it was valuable, I thought it was viable, and I thought it was in fact the very essence of our presence there.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q Just real briefly again, looking at Exhibit 2, in the event that IT ends up being buried by so many other exhibits. I would just like to return here to the contact section, the top of the first page, that second paragraph that reads, "The contact list includes the other



members in the very select Benghazi diplomatic community, the Italians, Turks, Maltese, Tunisians, Egyptians, Moroccans, and Sudanese have permanent presences here and honorary councils represent the Swedes and Fins. The French are working on a cultural center, and the Brits are scheduled to reopen their office here on September 1, close quote."

I know in the last round there was a question posed to you about the status of the British Mission there.

A Right.

Q And this email is dated from August 29.

A Okay.

Q But did you have any insight after you left Benghazi about the status of the other missions, the other diplomatic missions in Benghazi?

A I did not. Following my departure, I'm simply not aware the disposition of the other missions on the ground.

Q Okay. It does appear here that there is a contingent, a cohort of other countries that were represented in Libya. What was your sense of why they viewed it as important to be in Benghazi specifically?

A My sense was that the various countries had made their own calculations as to their interests, and they had different priorities. For example, Italian ties to Libya are longstanding. There were a number of Italian nationals who were resident in Libya. Their consul spent a good bit of his time attending to the Italian community there, and there were also commercial interests and investments there.

There were also a large number of Egyptian guest workers in Libya, especially in the east. The Egyptian consul spent a great deal of his time attending to issues arising from the presence of that large Egyptian community here as well.

The Turkish consul, was extraordinarily well connected, and for example, the Turkish airline, as I recall, had been the first to reestablish direct air service to Benghazi. Turkish corporations were very visible in investment there, so other countries certainly saw interests and opportunities in Benghazi.

Q And part of the reason why we ask is there has been a public discussion about why the U.S. continued to remain in Benghazi. In the course of the discussion, there has been assertions that the U.S. was the last flag flying, so to speak, but it would appear, just based on this, at least at this point in time, that that may not be an entirely accurate statement or view. Is that --

A In my time there, we were never the only flag flying.

Q So, thank you. I think that's been very helpful for us. We would like to shift gears a little bit.

A Okay.

Q And work a little bit backwards in time, so, we'll be jumping around a little bit. But, I would like to focus in the mid August time period, so we'll -- Exhibit 1 was the Guns of August cable that was sent by Embassy Tripoli. You participated in the drafting of that. We'd just like to get your assessment or your view of what was the response either from embassy or from other places to that cable? Did

you hear any concerns that were raised specifically with you about that cable and the information that was in it, and what were the steps that post undertook in response to that?

A I spoke on one of our conference calls with Washington following the cable where I recall that the receipt of the cable was noted, and the effusive praise for which State Department has noted, I think someone said "nice cable." This is considered fawning praise in the State Department.

But, I don't want to suggest that, absent the cable, I felt that people were not paying attention or that the cable was the only mechanism by which we tried to make aware the embassy in Tripoli and Washington as to our views of the situation there. This was designed to encapsulate, but it is an example, rather than the only example of that.

Q And, when you say you spoke to somebody in D.C. just to specify, so your -- can you just maybe just explain to us your reporting structure as a principal officer? Did you report to Embassy Tripoli? How would that dynamic work?

A I would communicate in the first instance with Embassy Tripoli, usually with the deputy chief of mission, but depending on the issue, with others as well, and often there would be a conference call involving Embassy Tripoli, usually the deputy chief of mission and Washington based officials of the Near East bureau.

Q Okay. And would those be individuals associated with the Office of Maghreb Affairs within NEA?

A Correct, yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall in the course of your discussion with either Embassy Tripoli or with the Mag desk, any requests that post revisit or update tripwires that had been established for post?

A I recall that following the report of incident at the Tibesti Hotel, the DCM in Tripoli asked what impact this would have, what role this had relative to our tripwires. Before my departure, we convened a meeting of the EAC, the Emergency Action Committee, to talk about the security situation, and in that context, we took a look at what our tripwires would be.

Q Okay.

A In other words, what would obligate us to modify our operations or our posture.

Q Sure. And just, could you generally describe for us what the tripwire was or what your understanding of what they were at the time?

A At the time, the previous the tripwires -- and these are -- this is a living document. These are subject to review and modification. In the aftermath of the election and in light of the events prior to my departure, we took a look at the tripwires to take a look at the prospect of what security incidents, whether in frequency or duration or scale would obligate us to look at changing our posture, restricting our movements or operations.

Q Okay. And the Emergency Action Committee that you just referred to, would that have been the forum for discussing these types

of issues?

A That is the formal forum. I would note that that was hardly the only discussion of security, and indeed, virtually every discussion incorporated security related events and considerations.

Q Okay. Again, to help guide our discussion here, I would like to mark Exhibit 4.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q This is an email. It's from [REDACTED] to you. It's dated August 14, 2012. The subject reads, "Tripwires," and there is an attachment listed which is, quote, "Benghazi assessment of tripwires broached as of August 13.DOCX," close quote. I'll just give you a moment to review this document if you would like.

So, the cover email here reads, quote, "My comments are in yellow in the attached document. Perhaps we could use some of these as talking points in the EAC. [REDACTED]," close quote?

A Yes.

Q Just to begin here, [REDACTED], who is he?

A He was, during his time in Benghazi, the senior RSO.

Q Okay. And RSO, regional security officer?

A Regional security officer.

Q And the attached document here, this assessment appears to list out tripwires. Under certain tripwires there appear to be some comments.

A Yes.

Q The copying is not the best, so it may be a little bit difficult in places to discern the comments from the tripwires, but I think, to the best of our understanding, the dash marks on the left signify each of those tripwires?

A Uh-huh.

Q So, do you see that?

A Right.

Q You know, with respect to these tripwires here, what -- do you know who was involved in setting these, or developing these tripwires?

A As I recall, the tripwires were a living document. First, the duration predated my arrival. Tripwires are reviewed and revised as appropriate based on events, and this was, as I recall, the basis for discussion of our EAC meeting.

Q Okay. And so, were you involved with the updating of this living document then, with respect just to the tripwires themselves?

A Yes, I was.

Q Okay. And could you just explain your role in that process?

A I chaired the discussion at the EAC at which these were discussed. Reviewing which events should represent tripwires for us moving to a heightened posture or towards consideration of authorized or ordered departure.

Q Okay. And was your understanding that the tripwires that previously existed, that those may have been based on some earlier

events that may have been overtaken?

A Again, not knowing the specifics of what happened before my arrival, that would have been my expectation, and certainly I regarded it as appropriate to continue to review, throughout my time there.

Q Okay. So these documents are organized, appears to be three sections, one section, "Events triggering a heightened security posture, another events triggering consideration of authorized departure, and finally events triggering consideration of ordered departure." Could you just help explain for us what those three categories mean?

A Broadly speaking, heightened security posture would be, a situation in which we would take steps that might include hosting meetings rather than traveling to them, restricting movement to or through certain areas, for example, on the basis of events. Authorized departure, is a status where emission based on security situation, affords staff the opportunity to leave post, if they so choose. Ordered departure, by contrast, is a circumstance by which departure of personnel from post, is directed and not optional.

Q Okay. Thank you. That is helpful. And again, there appear to be comments under each of those three categories for certain tripwires. And for these comments in particular, if I could draw your attention, do you recall whether you participated in the drafting of those comments? Do you recall whether it was the RSO who prepared those for your review or perhaps even anyone else?

A Overall, I would describe the mission as being extremely collaborative and very cooperative. My recollection is that [REDACTED] did these revisions. They are certainly consistent with the discussions that we all had about events. We shared information, to an extent beyond what I have seen in any of my other assignments throughout my career. And, I would like to say, that consistent with the highest praise one can give in the State Department, that I would unhesitatingly work again anywhere anytime with the officers I served with in Benghazi.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So, just along those lines. So, this particular EAC, who was participating in it? So, it was Mr. [REDACTED] and yourself?

A Right.

Q Who were the other participants?

A Some of the other RSO staff as well as other U.S. government representatives about whom I would be happy to speak in a different forum.



BY MS. SAWYER:

Q Was there anyone who wasn't in Benghazi participating by phone or in any other --

A I don't recall that we teleconferenced anyone else in. Our discussions were then conveyed to Embassy Tripoli.

Q And just in a generalized sense you described the three categories. Is it fair to say that they kind of go, whatever the tripwires are for to trigger heightened security, this is kind of in an ascending, I guess is the right word, level of seriousness, so from heightened to authorized, more serious tripwires, to order even more serious tripwires. Is that an accurate statement?

A Yes, broadly speaking, yes.

Q And did you feel that these tripwires themselves accurately reflected the range of considerations and security concerns that you felt were likely to be faced in Benghazi?

A I thought this reflected the range of challenges and the range of issues of concern that we understood based on our observation on the ground.

Q So with regard to setting up a good process for really understanding what the concerns were, really assessing those concerns, this tool, the tripwire tool, captured that in a robust way, it allowed

you to be able to make a really robust assessment of what posts needed to be doing?

A I thought it was extremely helpful, indeed necessary. I felt that security was a part of all of our discussions and all of our decisions. I thought it was helpful to have this formal framework as well, to put it in a rigorous and a routinized context, and to allow us to be able to periodically take a look back and determine where we were as opposed to where we had been previously.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And so just so we better understand, so again in the email it says, "Perhaps we can use some of these in talking points in the EAC." And I think you mentioned that you did in fact use this document at least as a guide in that discussion. Is that accurate?

A As I recall, yes.

Q Okay. I'd like at this point to mark those exhibits 5.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 5

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q So this is an email from Gregory Hicks to Ambassador Stevens dated August 15, 2012. The subject is "8/15 Update." Just note at the outset your name doesn't appear at the top of the thread here, but it does appear in an earlier email in the thread where you wrote to Gregory Hicks and [REDACTED]. That email is dated August 15, 2012. It has the same subject. Do you recall this email?

A I do. I welcome the opportunity to review it as well.

Q Okay. Please.

A Thank you.

Q And just a bit of housekeeping. So Exhibit 4, the document number is C05578623. Exhibit No. 5 is document number C05396708.

This email appears to be an unclassified readout of the EAC that we were just discussing where yourself, the security professionals at the post, had considered tripwires and your assessments or your views of those tripwires?

I would like to try to marry both of these documents and understand, I guess, first just taking a step back, the set of tripwires in the assessments, was this document thoroughly discussed in the EAC?

A As I recall it was, yes.

Q Okay. So these tripwires and these assessments were briefed and considered carefully by yourself and the other participants in the EAC?

A I certainly reviewed them and considered them very closely, and we certainly discussed them in the context of the EAC.

Q Okay. And so then here in Exhibit 5, you can just read a brief portion here, so at the beginning of the third paragraph it reads, quote, "We convened the EAC today, including all USG elements present, to review the situation and our security posture," close quote.

And jumping down, I will read through a few of these ticks here.

The first bullet reads, quote, "Agreed to review/revise the existing tripwires, which date to before the elections, to reflect present concerns," close quote.

The next bullet reads, quote, "Concluded that the situation merits concern and prudent risk management, particularly in light of recent incidents involving internationals as well as locals advocating priority issues such as human rights and women's participation."

The third reads, quote, "Recommended continued heightened security measures now in place," close quote.

The fourth reads, quote: "Recommended expansion of some precautionary measures," close quote, and proceeds to list a few of those.

Next item reads, quote, "Agreed to request a number of specific items/actions which we will spell out in a cable; and, Agreed to meet at least weekly in the future in light of the pace of developments on the ground," close quote.

So I would just like to ask first, given what we just discussed, that the Emergency Action Committee was the formal process by which a post would consider security incidents and whether to make any sort of adjustments to the security posture. And this document here, which appears to be a readout of the action items from that meeting, just, first, is this an accurate representation of the action items that came out of the EAC, to your recollection?

A To my recollection, yes, this is an accurate overview of the EAC.

Q Okay. We'll start with the second tick. I believe we discussed the first one here, which is to revise the tripwires. The second one referring to "the situation merits concern and prudent risk

management." Can you just maybe explain for us, we'll walk through each of these and maybe just kind of explain for us what they mean.

A Right. As it states, we concluded the situation merits concern. I believe given the array, the extent, the frequency of various security incidents, that the situation did merit concern. Accordingly, we worked hard to exercise prudent risk management, exercising, for example, with respect to our movements and the extent to which we maintained contacts to try to be as aware as possible as to the security environment.

Q Okay. In the third bullet here, it uses the term heightened security, recommended continued heightened security. Does that refer at all back to Exhibit 4, the first category, where you talk about events triggering a heightened security posture?

A Uh-huh.

Q Are those one and the same?

A Broadly speaking, yes. I feel that we were effectively at all times in a heightened security posture in that we were always attuned to the security situation and always factoring security into our decisions.

Q Okay. I know the fourth bullet there recommends some expansion of additional measures, additional precautionary measures. But this heightened security level, was there a recommendation that came out of the EAC that you should move, that post should move from one of the heightened security posture to perhaps an escalated level of security?

A I don't recall that we recommended moving from heightened posture to either authorized or ordered departure, for example. Within the context of heightened security posture we were always looking for ways that we could do more, that we could continue to do our utmost, and we specifically reference here drills, reduction of classified materials, as areas where we could be active and attentive.

Q Were those heightened security measures and the additional precautionary measures, were those, in your view, were those tailored to your understanding of what the threat or potential threat would look like in Benghazi against U.S. interests?

A They were tailored to what we had seen to date. They were tailored to what we thought could potentially occur as well.

Q The fifth tick here refers to a request for a number of specific items and actions. Do you recall that item?

A I recall making reference to it, yes.

Q Okay. Do you recall, here it says it will be spelled out in a cable, do you recall if that cable was ever sent?

A I don't recall if it was sent, if it was sent as a cable, or if it was communicated separately through DS channels. I don't recall.

Q Okay. So you never heard any additional information on the status of that request?

A I don't recall what the status of the recommendations were or their means of transmission.

Q Okay. And that's, again, because you believe that the RS0

on site would have handled that request?

A The technical security recommendations would appropriately go through the DS channels.

Q Okay. This general assessment or determination in the EAC to -- you said that you don't recall if there was a recommendation to elevate the security posture. Do you recall if anyone else had a recommendation within that EAC that post should take an enhanced view of security?

A As I recall, there was broad agreement at the meeting that we should all be prudent and attentive to the security situation. I felt that we all, all individuals and all agencies, were very mindful of that and always alert to ways that we could work to enhance our security.

Q Okay. And based on your understanding and your recollection of that broad agreement, do you recall if there was a recommendation or one of the recommendations that came out of the EAC was to move to an ordered departure status, for instance?

A I do not recall that there was a recommendation to move to either authorized or ordered departure.

Q I appreciate your patience and your indulgence. We have a few minutes left, so we would like to again shift gears and perhaps conclude our hour with another topic. This is one that was discussed at the outset of your interview today, and it relates to your assessment of the 17th February Martyrs Brigade. And to help guide our discussion I'd like to enter into the record, this will be Exhibit 6.

A Okay.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 6

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q And just to identify this document, this is an email dated August 13, 2012. It's from Ambassador Stevens to you as well as Gregory Hicks. And the subject is, quote, "February 17/QRF contract," close quote. Document number is C05395770.

Do you recall this email exchange?

A I do, yes.

Q You may have alluded to it even earlier today?

A Uh-huh.

Q I just thought it would be helpful to lay this email on the table, and perhaps you could walk us through this discussion. This appears to be you raising for the Ambassador, raising for Embassy Tripoli, including Deputy Chief of Mission Gregory Hicks, concerns or -- I don't want to mischaracterize how you would characterize this -- but the issue of the February 17th and the status of their relationship with post. And I was wondering if just to start, if you could kind of walk us through that conversation from the beginning?

A Okay. I'm happy to do so.

The contractual arrangement with February 17 predated my arrival in Benghazi. The duration of the contract was, as I understood it, linked to the transition following the election of the new governing body. I felt that that gave us the opportunity to evaluate whether



we wanted to consider other options for the QRF. I felt that the QRF added value because, not least, its association with February 17.

But I did want to put on the Ambassador's screen questions which I felt were relevant in that context. Those included the propriety of the arrangement. Following the election of government, should we take advantage of the opportunity to try to establish a relationship with the government and its security organs rather than a militia? Should we take into consideration the alleged role of February 17 elements in some of the security incidents?

I thought that because of the situation with the contract, because of the recent elections, and because of the security climate, that we should review this and make a decision rather than allow inertia to dictate the continuation of the status quo.

Q So your initial email here, was that intended to be a recommendation for a specific course of action or was it merely just to initiate that discussion that you're referring to?

A I wanted to initiate the discussion. I knew that our relationship with February 17 dated back to Ambassador Stevens' own time in Benghazi when he initially arrived there. I very much valued his perspective on that because of that relation and because of his knowledge of the context that predated my arrival.

I did not have a recommendation, other than the recommendation that we think about this and make an affirmative decision one way or another.

Q Okay. That's helpful.

The Ambassador wrote to you, and I'd just like to read a portion of this to follow the chain, he wrote, quote, and this is August 12, quote, "Thanks for flagging this issue, [REDACTED]. It's one we debated last year, as well, when we initially started using them, although back then it was admittedly more defensible to use a militia because there was literally nothing else. Is there any plausible security entity we can rely on to replace Feb 17, or do you think they'll be a force on the ground for the near (ie, through the end of the year) future? If you think they're 'it' for the time being, it seems to me that it would make sense to continue to use them, even though it doesn't square perfectly with our 'rule of law' agenda," close quote.

You replied here, quote, "I think that 2/17 will remain the most significant force on the ground for the coming months, though I think others (the SSC, the army, individual contractors) could do the job," close quote.

And just to conclude the loop, the Ambassador responds to you, quote, "OK, sounds like a good plan," close quote.

So again in the context of what we were just discussing that you wanted to put this on the Ambassador's radar, did you feel that you had reached a place where you put relevant information on the table so that the Ambassador could make a decision on the way forward with February 17?

A I felt that I had raised the issue and put the relevant information forward. I felt that Ambassador Stevens' questions about local practices were valid and an important part of that discussion.

I thought this was the beginning of that decisionmaking process. I didn't feel that this was the end of the decisionmaking process.

Q Okay. And I note here that you do mention that, quote, "Why don't I see what the other Consulates do and see if there is an approximation of a local standard," close quote. Do you recall following up on that?

A I recall talking with others in the diplomatic community, and I recall that there was, in fact, no standard at that time, that there were exceptions, but there was not a rule as to what others in the diplomatic community did.

Q Okay. Outside of this discussion here, did you raise any concerns about the 17th February Martyrs Brigade with the Ambassador? Did you ever specifically advocate to him that that relationship should be terminated?

A I did not advocate to him that the relationship with 2/17 with respect to the QRF be terminated. I felt that we were considering the issue. I thought that we were asking the right questions in order to reach a decision.

More broadly, I did raise with the Ambassador February 17 in light of the widespread view that elements of February 17 were involved in some of the recent issues, and I did recommend that the Ambassador meet with February 17 representatives on his planned trip to Benghazi.

Q Okay.

Ms. Sawyer. Was he receptive to that suggestion, that he meet, when he was going to be in town, that he meet with February 17?

Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, he was.

Ms. Sawyer. And was he -- I mean, it sounds like, certainly from the tenor of the exchange, that he was certainly receptive to revisiting the issue, exploring other options, gathering as much information, and that you were certainly during the remainder of your time certainly in the process of doing that and doing that for decisionmaking going forward.

Mr. [REDACTED] Chris was a personal friend and a professional colleague. Often it can be very difficult to work for a personal friend. Quite to the contrary in this instance, I feel that he was, in spite of his own experience on the ground, always receptive to what I had to say, and I will never forget that.

Mr. Kenny. Go off the record.

[Discussion off the record.]

Mr. Kenny. So pursuant to an agreement with the majority staff, we are going to continue for a brief period here, and then move and adjourn into a classified setting.

Does that sound fair?

Ms. Jackson. Correct.

Ms. Sawyer. So I just wanted to revisit briefly, at the end of when we concluded you had mentioned that working sometimes with friends can be difficult and that hadn't been the case here. But I also wondered if you had a sense, in addition to certainly being respectful to your feedback as to, you know, whether the Ambassador himself was also very attuned and knowledgeable about Benghazi, both with regard

to security and the challenges of security in Benghazi, and then Benghazi in terms of its -- the opportunities that it presented? Was he fully familiar with both the security side and the opportunity side?

Mr. [REDACTED] I would say that Chris was regarded by me and more broadly as the expert on Benghazi. And because of his presence and his role in Benghazi during the darkest times, that he enjoyed credibility there that no one else did or could. And I think he remained very interested in and aware of developments there, be they problems or be they opportunities.

BY MR. KENNY:

Q I would just like to take a brief moment here and turn our discussion to the Accountability Review Board --

A Of course.

Q -- and the Accountability Review Board process.

First of all, I'd just like to ask you, were you interviewed by the ARB?

A I was.

Q Okay. Do you recall who it was that you met with? Was it the full Board, certain Board members?

A I recall it was the full Board. I recall Ambassador Pickering, Admiral Mullen, Mr. Shinnick. Her name escapes me, but I recall she had been the leader of one of the United Nations agencies who was also on the. And I recall staff present as well.

Q Okay. Does the name Catherine Bertini --

A It does, in fact. Thank you.

Q In the course of your interview were you given the opportunity to provide information that you deemed to be pertinent?

A I provided written information to the Accountability Review Board and then met with them, during which time I felt that I was afforded the opportunity to give them my perspective based on my time there, yes.

Q Okay. And did you provide all information that you considered to be pertinent?

A I did.

Q There have been various accusations about the ARB, the process employed. I'd just like to ask you, were you ever asked or ordered not to provide information to the ARB?

A Never.

Q Were you ever asked or ordered to conceal or destroy information from the ARB?

A Never. Quite to the contrary.

Q Okay. And have you had an opportunity to read the ARB report?

A I have not read the report.

Q Okay. So that may abbreviate our discussion to a certain extent here. So neither the classified nor the --

A Neither/nor.

Q Okay. So appreciate your indulgence. You haven't read the ARB report or its findings. I would just like to read for you, so perhaps you may be viewing this for the first time, a brief portion,

and we think that this is relevant, especially in the discussion that we had in the previous rounds about the security situation in Benghazi and how that changed during your time there. So we'll go ahead and mark this Exhibit 7.

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 7

Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. KENNY:

Q This is a complete copy of the Accountability Review Board report. It's the unclassified version, it's publicly available, and it was released in the December 2012 timeframe. Won't ask you to read the entire thing right now, but would like to direct your attention to page 15. And this appears under a section, if you flip back the previous page, on page 13, the heading for this section is "Political and Security Context Prior to the Attacks." So again, returning to Page 15, I'd just like to read a portion here. First give you the opportunity to read page 15 and 16.

A Thank you.

Q Of course. So to refer back to the top of page 15. And, again, we do appreciate your indulgence here. I'd just like to read a brief portion of this.

The ARB found that, quote, "Throughout Libya, the security vacuum left by Qadhafi's departure, the continued presence of pro-Qadhafi supporters, the prevalence of and easy access to weapons, the inability of the interim government to reestablish a strong security apparatus, and the resulting weakness of those security forces that remained led

to a volatile situation in which militias previously united in opposition to Qadhafi were now jockeying for position in the new Libya. Frequent clashes, including assassinations, took place between contesting militias. Fundamentalist influence with Salafi and al Qaeda connections was also growing, including notably in the eastern region. Public attitudes in Benghazi continued to be positive toward Americans, and it was generally seen as safer for Americans given U.S. support for the TNC during the war. However, 2012 saw an overall deterioration of the security environment in Benghazi as highlighted by a series of security incidents involving the Special Mission, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and third country nationals and diplomats," close quote.

The ARB then proceeds to list a series of security incidents, includes certain events that occurred or incidents that happened while you were in Benghazi, such as the August 5, 2012, attack on the ICRC in Misrata, the August 9, 2012, abduction of an American dual national that we have discussed and referenced in the previous hours, as well as an attack on an Egyptian diplomat's vehicle.

The ARB continues, on Page 16, quote, "It is worth noting that the events above took place against a general backdrop of political violence, assassinations targeting former regime officials, lawlessness, and an overarching sense of central government authority in eastern Libya. While the June 6 IED at the SMC and the May ICRC attack were claimed by the same group, none of the remaining attacks were viewed in Tripoli and Benghazi as linked or having common



perpetrators, which were not viewed as linked or having common perpetrators," close quote.

And the reason that we bring this portion of the ARB up, there's been an extensive conversation about the security environment in Benghazi while you were posted there. I would just like to ask for your response to this passage, this description of the security environment. Did the ARB generally capture your views in Benghazi during this period?

A I feel that this passage is broadly consonant with my impressions, yes.

Q Okay. Is there anything that was left out that would help enrich our understanding of the events leading up to September 11?

A I don't believe so. I think this is -- the passage I've read I think is consistent with my observation and consistent with my discussion with the ARB.

Q Okay. I'd like to shift gears once again and I'd like to ask you a series of questions about the attacks and public allegations that have been made about the attacks. It's our understanding the committee is investigating these allegations, so we've taken the opportunity to ask as many witnesses as we can about them. Just ask for you to bear with us as we work through these. I'll just ask whether you have evidence or information that could corroborate or support any of these allegations, and then we can move on from there.

A Sure.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton

intentionally blocked military action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," close quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down," close quote, on the nights of the attacks?

A None.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense Panetta on the night of the attacks?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim and gave it four Pinnocchios, its highest award for false claims.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security resources to Libya?

A None.

Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was personally involved in providing specific instruction on day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own

people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in the spring of 2011.

Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that the U.S. mission in Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found, quote, "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to Syria," close quote, and they found, quote, "no support for this allegation," close quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the House Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding the CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

A None.

Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

A None.

Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special Mission Compound, and there have been a number of allegations about the cause and the appropriateness of that delay. The House Intelligence Committee

issued a bipartisan report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote, "stand down," close quote, but that instead there were tactical disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand down order to CIA personnel?

A None.

Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the decision to delay or think it was the right decision, do you have any evidence that there was, quote, "bad," close quote, or improper reason behind the temporary delay of CIA security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the Special Mission Compound?

A None.

Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in the course of producing documents to the Accountability Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or scrubbed out of that production.

Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A None.

Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department directed anyone else at the State Department to remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

A None.

Q Let me ask these questions also for documents that were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi attacks for political reasons and that he then misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship," close quote.

Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

A None.

Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for political reasons?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made an, quote, "intentional misrepresentation," close quote, when she spoke on the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks.

Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks on the Sunday talk shows?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that the President of the United States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief," close quote, on the night of the attacks and that he was, quote, "missing in action," close quote.

Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that the President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or missing in action on the night of the attacks?

A None.

Q It has further been alleged that a team of four military personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi but were ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," close quote, meaning to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in place," close quote, in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance in their current location. The Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," close quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of the House Armed Services Committee that there was no stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel Tripoli who sought to join the fight in Benghazi?

A None.

Q It has been alleged that the military failed to deploy

assets on the night of the attack that would have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did," close quote.

Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman McKeon's conclusion?

A None.

Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had military assets available to them on the night of the attacks that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership intentionally decided not to deploy?

A None.

Mr. Kenny. With that, we will go off the record.

[Whereupon, at 3:45 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

1       Ms. Jackson. This is a continuation of the transcribed  
2 interviewed of [REDACTED]. We have moved into a  
3 classified setting. It is my understanding that everyone  
4 here is cleared at least to the TS level, however, we  
5 anticipate that this discussion will be no higher than the  
6 secret level.

7                               EXAMINATION

8               BY MS. JACKSON:

9               Q     Mr. [REDACTED], if at any time you think an answer is  
10 going to be higher than top secret level, to the best of your  
11 ability if you could flag it for us, we would greatly  
12 appreciate it. It helps in reviewing the transcript for  
13 classification review?

14              A     Sure.

15              Q     But if you don't, that is our responsibility and  
16 not yours. But to the extent you think you're going to a  
17 higher level, please try and flag it for us.

18              As we start this classified session I wanted to follow  
19 up on a few things. I don't think many of these things are  
20 classified, but I just wanted to ask you a few questions.

21              We talked about [REDACTED] as being the senior RSO  
22 when you were in Benghazi. Had he departed before you did?

23              A     No, I departed before he did.

24              Q     Before he did. Okay. Who were the other DS agents  
25 who were on the ground at the time you left Benghazi?



1           A     At the time I departed there was [REDACTED]. [REDACTED]  
2     [REDACTED] was there. There was another DS agent whose name  
3     immediately escapes me. And as I recall, there was an  
4     officer who had just arrived who was due to replace [REDACTED]  
5     following his rotation out of the country.

6           Q     Okay. During the time that you were in Benghazi,  
7     did the RSO and ARSOs [REDACTED]  
8     [REDACTED]

9           A     [REDACTED]

10          Q     [REDACTED]  
11     [REDACTED]

12          A     [REDACTED]  
13     [REDACTED]  
14     [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
15     [REDACTED]  
16     [REDACTED]

17          Q     [REDACTED]  
18     [REDACTED]  
19     [REDACTED]

20          A     [REDACTED]  
21     [REDACTED]  
22     [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
23     [REDACTED]  
24     [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
25     [REDACTED]

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Q Were there any incidents or opportunities where you would train together or have joint drills together or otherwise share experiences in that respect?

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A We did share our experiences. I recall that we attended a very comprehensive drill that was conducted

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Q And what type of a drill was that?

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So there was very open dialogue, which I felt was invaluable.

24

Q Did any

25

conduct any type of drills or training to your QRF or

1 Local Guard force?

2 A I don't recall that they were involved in training  
3 or drills for our QRF or Local Guard force, but the drills  
4 and the training for the QRF and the Local Guard force were  
5 done on an ongoing basis, and the RSO and ARSOs focused quite  
6 intensively on that through my time there.

7 Q In Exhibit 5, which was the summary of the EAC,  
8 there is a reference to consideration of collocation.

9 A Yes.

10 Q Do you see that?

11 A I do.

12 Q And that was -- first of all, let me back up. [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]

17 Q Okay. And what, if any, discussion did you have  
18 regarding collocation at that EAC?

19 A We talked, following up on previous discussion that  
20 we had had in a less formal setting, about the prospect of  
21 our personnel from our compound, if we felt the environment  
22 warranted it, going to [REDACTED]

23 [REDACTED]

24 Q Was there any -- and that was a short-term  
25 resolution that you were discussing at that time?

1       A     We regarded that as a short-term contingency. The  
2 term collocation, however, also came up in terms of  
3 discussions regarding our longer-term U.S. Government  
4 presence in Benghazi.

5       Q     And I believe you had been asked much earlier today  
6 about the size of the Special Mission Compound in Benghazi  
7 that you had and that, given its relative size, was it too  
8 big, too small, just the right size?

9       A     Right.

10      Q     And I believe you reserved part of your answer for  
11 this setting. Was that because the issue of long-term  
12 collocation had been discussed?

13      A     Yes, precisely.

14      Q     Okay. And can you tell us about that?

15      A     Yes. In looking at the issue of long-term U.S.  
16 Government presence in Benghazi, the question of collocation

17 [REDACTED]

18 [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED]

20 survey of the site of the State compound as a potential venue  
21 for a consolidated presence. Additionally, I went to look at  
22 the property adjacent to the State compound, which was also a  
23 potential site for a collocated presence in the longer term.

24      Q     During these ongoing discussions had you formulated  
25 your own opinion as to what should be the -- if you got to

1 make the decision, what should be the way forward if there  
2 was going to be a continued long-term presence in Benghazi?

3 A I hasten to add that you are the first person who  
4 suggested that this was in any way my decision. I supported  
5 collocation for a number of reasons. I thought it would be,  
6 in terms of effectiveness, I thought it would be economical.  
7 I thought operationally it would be helpful [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
10 [REDACTED]. I thought it was possible, I thought we had  
11 the physical space to do it, and I thought it was the right  
12 thing to do.

13 Q So if you had had a magic wand and could have made  
14 things different during the time that you were in Benghazi,  
15 would you have preferred to have been [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED]  
17 A I understand that actually achieving collocation  
18 was going to be a process. We would have had to undertake  
19 some construction on the site, for example, in order to make  
20 room for all the personnel. I understood that even had a  
21 decision been made, there would have been a period of time to  
22 go through the steps of implementation. But I thought it  
23 made sense from a very practical level, not just from  
24 security, but I thought there were synergies that could be  
25 achieved from collocation.

1           Q    Is it your assessment and belief that security  
2    would have been improved if you were collocated?

3           A    I felt that there would have been greater safety in  
4    greater numbers. I had the utmost respect for the dedication  
5    and the capabilities [REDACTED], and I  
6    thought that more would have been more.

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A Yes.

A I don't recall if, or how it went. I do recall  
ng on writing it up. Our connectivity in Benghazi, both  
and unclass, was not always a sure thing.

A I do, yes.

A As I recall, it talks about the security situation  
ome detail with respect to events that had happened, but  
recall, I worked off these points as an outline for  
So, it would've been, broadly speaking, a longer  
on, and it would have included some of the specific  
ersation in the course of the EAC.

?

A It would have included their views and comments.

1       yes.

2           Q     Would it have also included attribution for certain  
3     of the security incidents that had occurred, or suspected  
4     attribution?

5           A     I don't specifically recall. The question of  
6     attribution of responsibility for some of the security issues  
7     was an issue I do remember [REDACTED]

8           Q     Okay.

9           A     Yes.

10          Q     And, were any of the incidents attributed to  
11     Islamic extremists?

12          A     There were assertions of the responsibility of  
13     Islamist extremists for some of the security incidents.  
14     There were very often competing and contesting theories as to  
15     who was responsible for which incident or incidents. Oft  
16     times, the assertion would be made that former regime  
17     elements rather than Islamist extremists were responsible.

18          Q     Was it your sense during the time that you were in  
19     Benghazi that there was a rise in the, either number or scope  
20     of Islamic extremists in the area, or did you receive  
21     intelligence to that effect?

22          A     [REDACTED] It was  
23     certainly something that I was mindful of, certainly  
24     something I asked contacts about for their perceptions. Many  
25     of my contacts expressed concern --



1 Q Okay. Sorry. Please continue.

2 A -- about the impact of the security situation and  
3 the possibility that it would provide an environment in which  
4 extremists could operate, including Islamist extremists.

5 Q Earlier today, we talked about your reporting back  
6 to Embassy Tripoli, to Main State, and we -- I inquired as to  
7 whether you reported back to any other U.S. Government  
8 entities or agencies, and I believe you said that you wanted  
9 to reserve that to this setting. Do you remember that  
10 question?

11 A Yes.

12 Q General topic?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Okay. What other U.S. Government personnel,  
15 agencies, or entities did you report back what you were  
16 seeing in Benghazi?

17 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED] I understand -- I recall [REDACTED] understanding  
19 that some of that information from my meetings was then  
20 forwarded in their reporting [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

21 Q Did you have any connectivity or discussions with  
22 any member of the national security staff?

23 A During the course of my time in Benghazi, a  
24 National Security Council staffer paid a visit to Libya,  
25 including a stop in Benghazi.

1 Q And who was that individual?

2 A That was Ben Fishman.

3 Q Okay. And had you had conversations with him prior  
4 to his arrival in Benghazi?

5 A As I recall, we had emailed about his trip. I  
6 don't recall if we had spoken, but to give him a sense, for  
7 example, of scheduling, who he would be meeting with, et  
8 cetera, et cetera. And then I served as his control officer  
9 during the time on the ground in Benghazi.

10 Q Were there any briefing materials that you or  
11 others put together, materials that you would have reviewed  
12 that would've been sent to him in advance of his trip?

13 A I don't recall doing a formal welcome cable, as is  
14 often done prior to visits. I recall that we were -- I  
15 recall that we were in touch. I don't recall providing a  
16 formal -- a briefing book in anticipation of that.

17 Q Okay. I've seen documents that are called scene  
18 setters. Do you know --

19 A Oh yeah. Yes, yes, yes.

20 Q Okay. What is a scene setter? What is the purpose  
21 of a scene setter in the State Department?

22 A Standard practice in anticipation of visits is to  
23 provide a scene setter, usually by front channel cable. And  
24 this is to afford the incoming visitor with the embassy's  
25 perspective on ongoing events.

1 Q Okay. Do you recall preparing anything like that  
2 in advance of Mr. Fishman's visit?

3 A I don't recall if I did a formal scene setter for  
4 that.

5 Q Okay. But you recall at least you had an informal  
6 email to him outlining various aspects of Benghazi?

7 A I recall that we had informal contacts. I don't  
8 recall if it was email or phone. And then we spent all of  
9 his time in Benghazi together.

10 Q Okay. And when he was in Benghazi, what was your  
11 schedule that day? What are the things that you and he did  
12 together?

13 A [REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]. He met with the Municipal Council,  
16 which was responsible for the sort of city Government of  
17 Benghazi. He met with a local activist who was regarded as  
18 one of the great voices for women's rights and who was also  
19 active in preparing a draft constitution in anticipation of  
20 that process. He had a press availability with local media.  
21 That night we had dinner with Fawzi Yunis from the SSC at our  
22 mission.

23 Q [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED]?

25 A I recall in general they talked about what they

1 were focusing on, their perspective on the current state of  
2 play. I don't recall anything that was new to me that I had  
3 not heard from them previously in our regular contact.

4 Q Did they brief them on the rise of Islamic  
5 extremists in the area?

6 A As I recall, we did talk about the full range of  
7 actors.

8 Q Including Islamic extremists?

9 A Including that. As I said, this is an issue on  
10 which they were focusing.

11 Q Okay. Did you have any follow-up contact with  
12 Mr. Fishman after his trip?

13 A We may have had subsequent emails, but I wouldn't  
14 say we had a regular channel of communication directly back  
15 to him. My chain ran through Tripoli.

16 Q And what was your understanding of his role with  
17 the national security staff?

18 A My understanding was that his responsibilities on  
19 the NSC staff included Libya, consistent with their division  
20 of geographic responsibilities.

21 Q I'm going to turn it over to my colleague,  
22 Ms. Clarke now.

23 BY MS. CLARKE:

24 Q Mr. [REDACTED], during your time in Benghazi, were  
25 you aware of U.S. Government contractors that were involved

1 in MANPADs programs?

2 A I did become aware of that, yes.

3 Q And when did you become aware of that?

4 A I became aware of that when I learned that there  
5 had been communication to them that they should suspend their  
6 operations in Benghazi.

7 Q And --

8 A Their existence prior to that was unknown to me and  
9 evidently unreported to the mission in Benghazi.

10 Q And who suggested or told them that they should  
11 suspend their operations?

12 A My understanding was that they were working on a  
13 contract basis, and that the chain ran from the contractor to  
14 the personnel on the ground, and that the funding stream had  
15 been provided at least in some part by the USG. And I recall  
16 expressing some surprise and frustration at their presence  
17 here, having been unknown to the mission.

18 Q Would you say the funding stream was in part from  
19 the U.S. Government, was that from the State Department or

20 [REDACTED]

21 A I don't know specifically what the funding stream  
22 was, other than it was USG.

23 Q Do you know if the program was run [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED]?

25 A I don't know if it was [REDACTED]

1

2 Q About how many contractors were present when you  
3 became aware of their presence in Benghazi?

4

A I don't recall that they specified the number.

5

6 Q Did you get a sense of how -- whether it was a  
large number or a small number?

7

A I did not.

8

9 Q Once you became aware of the contractors' presence  
10 in Benghazi, did you have an opportunity to talk with someone  
who was a part of the contract program?

11

A As I recall, I inquired as to whether anyone else  
12 at the mission was aware of this or if anyone in Tripoli had  
13 any visibility on this.

14

Q And was anyone else at the mission aware of the  
15 contractors at the time?

16

A As I recall, no, they were not.

17

Q What about anyone in Tripoli?

18

A I don't recall whether they were aware of the  
19 presence. I recall reporting it to them, particularly  
20 because of my concern about coordination.

21

Q What was your concern about coordination?

22

A That we have a consistent approach with respect to  
23 U.S. Government agencies or U.S. Government-funded  
24 activities.

25

Q Did you ever learn the name of any of the -- of a

1 contractor company that was involved?

2 A I don't recall if the name was part of it, or if it  
3 was merely identified as a company funded by. I don't  
4 recall.

5 Q And how did you come to learn about their presence  
6 in Benghazi?

7 A As I recall, it was by email, but I don't recall  
8 who the originator was.

9 Q Do you recall what the email was regarding?

10 A As I recall, it was that these contract personnel  
11 had decided or been directed to suspend operations in  
12 Benghazi.

13 Q I think we're at Exhibit 8 now, so I'm going to go  
14 ahead and mark this as Exhibit 8.

15 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 8  
16 was marked for identification.]

17 BY MS. CLARKE:

18 Q And I note for the record this document, is  
19 document No. 05390840. It's a two-page document, but to  
20 conserve paper, we printed on both sides, and it states no  
21 classification.

22 A Thank you.

23 Q Okay. Do you recall seeing this email?

24 A I do, yes.

25 Q Is this the email you were referring to?

1 A Yes.

2 Q Okay. I wanted to direct your attention to the  
3 bottom of the first page. It begins with an email from [REDACTED]  
4 [REDACTED] to [REDACTED]. And do you know if [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED] is?

6 A Yes. She was at that time the deputy director of  
7 the State Department's Maghreb Office.

8 Q Okay. And he writes, quote, "[REDACTED], for your  
9 situational awareness -- not sure of PM/WRA has passed this  
10 information to you. Due to the deteriorating security in and  
11 around Benghazi, we have authorized our MANPADs contractor in  
12 Benghazi to take the steps listed below. This decision was  
13 made with the assistance and concurrence of the embassy ([REDACTED]  
14 [REDACTED])" Do you know who [REDACTED] was?

15 A I do not.

16 Q [REDACTED] writes back to him and says, "[REDACTED], many  
17 thanks. Looping in Benghazi principal officer, [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED], as I didn't see him anywhere on the attached  
19 thread." And then your response, you begin asking several  
20 questions about what is their chain of command, whether they  
21 are under the chief of mission.

22 Did you ever receive a response regarding the chain of  
23 command for these individuals in Benghazi?

24 A I don't recall the issue of their chain of command  
25 being detailed to me, no.



1 Q What about their purpose in Benghazi, what they  
2 were actually doing?

3 A I don't recall any further detail on their mission  
4 in Benghazi.

5 Q Did you ever have any discussions with anyone in  
6 Tripoli about the individuals being in Benghazi and what  
7 their program was about?

8 A I recall in the handoff notes to Mr. [REDACTED]  
9 noting that the issue of contractors, was one that had arisen  
10 during my time there, emphasizing the importance of a  
11 coordinated approach.

12 Q In response to this email or conversations that you  
13 may have had with individuals, did you get any further  
14 follow-up information regarding the contractors?

15 A I don't recall getting further clarification  
16 following this email.

17 Q So, this email was approximately 2 weeks before  
18 your departure from Benghazi. When you departed, were you --  
19 did you have any information or were you aware of whether or  
20 not those contractors had actually left Benghazi?

21 A I had no information.

22 Q Did you know an individual that was associated with  
23 the February 17 by the name of [REDACTED]?

24 A I'm sorry, is that first or last name?

25 Q We've only seen -- I think it's first. [REDACTED].

1           A     Not immediately, but with the passing of time, I  
2 confess, memories fade.

3           Q     Were there any -- during your time there, were  
4 there any individuals associated with February 17 that was  
5 dismissed or fired?

6           A     I recall that one of the QRF members left and moved  
7 to Tripoli. His name [REDACTED] was [REDACTED]. And  
8 this occurred in the context of our previous discussion about  
9 February 17 and what our long-term arrangements should be.  
10 [REDACTED] may have been one of the QRF members. I'm afraid I  
11 simply don't remember all their names.

12          Q     Okay.

13               BY MS. JACKSON:

14          Q     Was there a QRF member that would more often than  
15 not act as a translator, if need be?

16          A     As I recall, one of them had better English than  
17 the others, and then logically, would translate, for example,  
18 checkpoints and things like that.

19          Q     Okay. Do you recall that individual's name?

20          A     I am afraid I don't, no.

21          Q     Okay. I want to return to a different topic -- or  
22 turn to a different topic at this time. In or around the  
23 middle of August, about 2 weeks before you were gone, were  
24 you aware if there was any discussion about writing a memo to  
25 the Secretary, detailing the security situation in Benghazi,

1 an information memo to the Secretary?

2 A I don't recall that. I recall that the question of  
3 our long-term presence was being discussed in connection with  
4 some of the other senior department leadership, but I don't  
5 recall that in the context of involving the Secretary.

6 Q And who would have been those other senior  
7 department leaders that would have been involved in the  
8 discussion of whether to continue your presence in Benghazi?

9 A Not having been involved in any such discussions, I  
10 can only approximate. I would think it would be considered  
11 both a political and a management issue.

12 Q So both of those under secretaries?

13 A I would imagine that it would have implications  
14 that were both policy and management. But I was not a party  
15 to any such discussions with Washington.

16 Q Okay. Do you recall in mid-August, approximately  
17 2 weeks before you go, you left Benghazi, that the senior RSO  
18 and the ARSOs were compiling a list of the security incidents  
19 that had occurred in and around Benghazi?

20 A Yes. We kept track of incidents and, as I recall,  
21 [REDACTED], we were working on an  
22 exercise where we could more precisely map out the locations  
23 of all the various incidents of which we were aware.

24 Q Okay. So, you were aware that the DS agents were  
25 keeping essentially a log or a list of the various incidents

1 as well as their locations?

2 A Yes, we were always trying to compile information  
3 and always trying to use that information again to try to  
4 determine what else we needed to do and what all of this  
5 represented in terms of trends.

6 Q And, in what format was that information kept? Was  
7 it a Word document? Was it on the high side? Was it an  
8 Excel spreadsheet? Was it a map with --

9 A I recall we had a lot of maps up. I don't know  
10 specifically whether they kept it as a Word document or, in  
11 terms of formatting, I simply don't recall.

12 Q Okay. But it was a written document of some sort?

13 A As I recall, it was, yes.

14 Q Okay. And do you know, in your time in Benghazi,  
15 who would have been the author of that -- of any updates to  
16 that document?

17 A Responsibilities were often shared. I don't  
18 remember who precisely. I would think quite likely it would  
19 reflect input from a number of the officers there.

20 Q Okay. During the time that you were in Benghazi,  
21 were there any discussions of a visit by the Secretary to not  
22 only Libya but to Benghazi in particular?

23 A I don't recall that, no.

24 Q Do you recall any discussions about her visiting  
25 Libya?

1 A I don't recall that, no.

2 Q Okay.

3 BY MS. CLARKE:

4 Q In the previous hour, there was a discussion about  
5 a potential upcoming trip for the Boston Boys choir?

6 A Uh-huh, yes.

7 Q And I just wanted to ask a question. You said  
8 that, to paraphrase, theoretically, you supported such a  
9 trip. Would you have supported such a trip if that trip were  
10 to have occurred within a 2-week timeframe of -- or during  
11 your time in Benghazi or within a 2-week timeframe of your  
12 departure of Benghazi?

13 A That's a hypothetical?

14 Q Uh-huh.

15 A As I stated, I was supportive of our engagement,  
16 including our cultural engagement. I thought it was  
17 important for us to be considered and included and to have  
18 the option, but that was going to be a decision that I think  
19 would have to have been made much closer to the actual event  
20 by people who were on the ground.

21 BY MS. JACKSON:

22 Q And was that due to the security situation being  
23 tenuous?

24 A I think certainly that the security situation would  
25 be a factor in any such decision.

1 Q Would it, if you had had to make the decision at  
2 the time you left Benghazi, would you have, if the event was  
3 to be the following week, would you have recommended  
4 canceling it?

5 A Again, that's a hypothetical. What I did recommend  
6 was that we maintain the option to do that, while at the same  
7 time, maintaining the flexibility to make the determination  
8 when we were, in fact, a week out, as you said.

9 Ms. Clarke. I think those are all our questions, so  
10 we'll go off the record.

11 [Recess.]

12 EXAMINATION

13 BY MR. KENNY:

14 Q We'll go back on the record. The time is, it's now  
15 a quarter to five. Mr. [REDACTED] again, thank you, appreciate  
16 your patience. It's been a long day. Hope to work some  
17 follow-up questions with you, work them as quickly as  
18 expeditiously as we can. We may jump around from topic to  
19 topic. We'll try to track some of the topics that were just  
20 discussed in the last hour.

21 I would like to begin first with the discussion about  
22 national security staff, country director Ben Fishman, who  
23 traveled to Libya and Benghazi while you were there. You had  
24 mentioned that you were the control officer for him and also  
25 walked us through a few of his meetings. I guess, as the

1 patrol officer, were you generally aware of the purpose of  
2 his visit, of his trip to Benghazi specifically?

3 A I coordinated his appointments and accompanied him  
4 to his meetings and then, as I recall, wrote up his visit. I  
5 understood his trip to be reflective of his interest in  
6 seeing the situation on the ground. This was very consistent  
7 with my experiences throughout my career at all the posts  
8 I've served in.

9 Q Okay. And you mentioned -- and it was helpful.  
10 You walked us through some of the meetings that you had set  
11 up in which he attended, and one of those meetings including  
12 a press availability. And I was wondering if you could just  
13 discuss for us what that was, where it took place, anything  
14 notable that may have occurred during that availability.

15 A We hosted that in the residential building on the  
16 compound. There were perhaps, by my recollection, half a  
17 dozen representatives of the local media there, and they were  
18 free to ask Ben a series of questions. They availed  
19 themselves of the opportunity.

20 I recall subsequently he and I both expressed that we  
21 were very impressed given the very short tradition of a free  
22 press in Libya that they asked substantive questions of him  
23 about American policy, and I thought it was a very effective  
24 use of time, both practically in terms of affording him an  
25 opportunity to send messages via the media, but also

1        symbolically that there was a free media now in Libya with  
2        whom we would engage.

3            Q        Okay. And given the fact of his press appearance,  
4        the press availability that was made, was there any steps  
5        taken to conceal in any way his presence in Benghazi during  
6        his time there? Was his visit there generally known to, for  
7        instance, the members of the press?

8            A        We were prudent. We did not broadcast his visit,  
9        for example. We contacted media representatives and invited  
10       them to the compound for this purpose. Similarly, we  
11       approached the other interlocutors with whom he met, but we  
12       did not do any prior public announcement. We did not provide  
13       any details, for example, regarding venues or movements. We  
14       did this in recognition, that the situation there counseled a  
15       prudent approach.

16          Q        I'd like to move on now to -- and we'll return,  
17       just briefly, to Exhibit 8. In here, we were having a  
18       discussion of certain contractors who were operating in and  
19       around Benghazi during the time that you were there. And you  
20       mentioned when you first became aware of their presence  
21       there, you mentioned that you -- you expressed some surprise.  
22       I was just wondering, did you subsequently follow up with  
23       anyone in the embassy? Do you recall receiving a phone call,  
24       for instance, from anyone in the embassy seeking to brief you  
25       on the matter when you expressed surprise?



1           A     I don't recall being subsequently briefed about  
2     this program, no.

3           Q     Okay. Was your sense -- did you ask or do you  
4     remember -- do you recall asking for additional information  
5     about the program and what the purpose of the presence of the  
6     contractors was?

7           A     I want to be clear, I didn't seek to gain, say or  
8     in any way second guess the program. And I worked in  
9     countries where we have had analogous collection efforts, and  
10    I appreciate their value. My question and my concern was one  
11    of coordination and one of what approach we needed to take to  
12    ensure consistency.

13          Q     Okay. And further, to that point, at least in this  
14    email, it appears that the contractor or the division of the  
15    State Department that was responsible or had some sort of  
16    oversight of the contractors, was in contact with, for  
17    instance, the Libyan desk. And that would've included a  
18    broad range of individuals in D.C.? Is that accurate?

19          A     As I recall, that was a collective that went to a  
20    number of individual officers; yes.

21          Q     Okay. Did anyone ever tell you, hey, [REDACTED], don't  
22    ask any questions about this program out in Eastern Libya?

23          A     I don't remember anyone ever telling me not to ask  
24    about anything.

25          Q     Okay. It just so happens that you don't recall

1 specifically asking questions about that program. You're --  
2 it sounds like, and please correct me if I'm  
3 mischaracterizing, but that -- and again, this returns to the  
4 notion or the issue of coordination, that there are  
5 individuals on the ground implementing particular programs.  
6 You would like to have some visibility into that; is that  
7 fair?

8 A Precisely.

9 Q Okay. Just real briefly, to touch on Exhibit 8.  
10 On the second page, and this is the email from the deputy  
11 director and chief of operations. There's six action items  
12 here that appears to spell out the demobilization effort for  
13 the contractor. We'll note in the first one that it  
14 refers -- that four women working in that area would be  
15 demobilized; the second one refers to people with young  
16 families being demobilized; the third is anyone who is  
17 uncomfortable would be demobilized; and then the fourth one  
18 is for those out of the country.

19 You know, fully recognizing that there may be --  
20 contractors follow different policies, different procedures,  
21 does this look to you similar on the tripwire document that  
22 we were referring to, would this be similar to what you  
23 described or how you defined for us what authorized departure  
24 was? Would this be something a little less? A little more?

25 A I'm afraid my ability to draw that comparison is

1 limited given my lack of familiarity with whatever standards  
2 they have in place. I can speak to what we had in place with  
3 respect to state standards, but I recall this incident in the  
4 context of not knowing anything about it before the fact.

5 Q Okay. And under bullet number 5, the sentence, the  
6 second part of the sentence refers to relocating certain  
7 personnel to, quote, "the main GOP compound, which is in a  
8 quieter area and more secure," closed quote. You were in  
9 Benghazi for a few weeks after this email was sent. Do you  
10 recall the coordination efforts at all being improved with  
11 respect to any of the contractors who may have been located  
12 at that particular site?

13 A I don't recall that, and I don't recall any other  
14 roughly analogous issues either, with respect to contractors.

15 Q Okay. And, again, just at the bottom, the  
16 second-to-last sentence reads, quote, "The GOP contract was  
17 nearing its end and they were about to begin demobilization  
18 soon anyway," closed quote. Did anybody talk to you about  
19 that aspect, that this was a contract that was nearing its  
20 end and a demobilization was contractually driven? Do you  
21 recall any conversations about that?

22 A I do not, no.

23 Q Okay. I would like to turn now --

24 Ms. Sawyer. Can we go off the record just for a second.

25 [Discussion off the record.]

[REDACTED] Exhibit No. 9  
was marked for identification.]

Mr. Kenny. We'll go back on the record.

Q Okay. And just to continue our conversation from before, this would be the output or the product from the Emergency Action Committee meeting that was previously held;

1 is that right?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Okay. Note in the summary of the first paragraph  
4 here, it provides a brief overview. The second sentence  
5 reads, quote, "The EAC discussed, one, the increase in  
6 violent incidents in Benghazi; two, the departure of private  
7 and public sector organizations; three, the rise of  
8 potentially anti-Western militias; and four, post-nation  
9 security capabilities in response to these issues," closed  
10 quote.

11 The four topics there, appears to cover a wide range of  
12 issues. The cable appears to go into much more detail as  
13 well.

14 A Yes.

15 Q Can you just perhaps walk us through it. Was this  
16 cable here -- I guess we can first start, did you ultimately  
17 approve this cable before it went out?

18 A Cables were sent from Tripoli and approved by the  
19 ambassador or charge. I would have cleared off on its  
20 transmission from Benghazi to Tripoli for transmission there.

21 Q Okay. Does the content of this cable and that  
22 discussion covered in those four categories of information,  
23 does that accurately reflect what transpired, what occurred  
24 in the August 15 EAC?

25 A To my recollection, it does, yes.

1 Q Okay. And in the subsequent paragraphs, it  
2 discusses some of the headers. You have deteriorating  
3 security situation, again, departure of organizations from  
4 Benghazi, increase in hostile militias. Can you just walk us  
5 through -- now that we're in a classified setting -- your  
6 discussion with RSO [REDACTED] -- I'm sorry. Strike that --  
7 with the acting-RSO [REDACTED] at the time, as well as  
8 any other personnel who may have participated in this. Just  
9 walk us through that discussion in the consideration of this  
10 information.

11 A The discussion was -- involved [REDACTED] the RSO [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED].

13 Q Okay.

14 A In that context, we talked about the overall  
15 security situation to include local security forces  
16 capabilities and specifically to identify organizations and  
17 areas that would be of particular concern consistent with our  
18 previously-mentioned efforts to map out areas that would be  
19 of heightened concern.

20 Q Do you -- is it your sense that the EAC considered  
21 all the information at its disposal at this time -- at the  
22 time of the EAC?

23 A I believe we did consider all available  
24 information, yes.

25 Q Okay. And, again, the participants would include

1       yourself, the RSO, [REDACTED]; is that  
2       right?

3           A     That is correct.

4           Q     Okay. And would each of those individuals have  
5       participated, including yourself, in the EAC to discuss  
6       security incidents, the security environment more generally?

7           A     Yes, both in the discussion in the EAC as well as  
8       continuing in informal discussions on security issues, yes.

9           Q     Okay. Is it accurate then that the EAC considered  
10      the waterfront, if you will, of the risk and the threat that  
11      was in Benghazi at this time?

12          A     It was a comprehensive discussion. It was, as I  
13      recall, a candid discussion on the basis of what we knew,  
14      what we thought based on our observation and experience, yes.

15          Q     Were each of these points, the headers that I read  
16      to you, were each of those carefully considered and discussed  
17      in the EAC?

18          A     I believe that this text is reflective of  
19      conversation, and certainly it was drafted and reviewed with  
20      care to providing an accurate accounting of that discussion.

21          Q     Okay. And I'd like to read from the third sentence  
22      in the first paragraph. It reads, quote, "The EAC resolved  
23      to, one, update and modify the tripwire matrix to include a,  
24      quote, 'suspension of operations,' closed quote, section;  
25      two, [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED] and three, submit additional  
2 equipment/manpower needs to U.S. Embassy Tripoli for review,"  
3 closed quote.

4 Again, we discussed in unclassified setting and a little  
5 bit in the last hour some of the actions that were taken or  
6 recommendations that were made in the EAC. Is this a fair  
7 representation, an accurate representation of the  
8 recommendations of the EAC?

9 A I believe it is an accurate accounting of  
10 discussion in the EAC, yes.

11 Q Okay. And just to match this up a little bit with  
12 Exhibit 5, which was the unclassified readout of this, you'd  
13 indicated earlier that you didn't recall whether the EAC had  
14 made a formal recommendation about a change in security  
15 posture, whether to upgrade to ordered or authorized  
16 departure. Does this document help refresh your recollection  
17 about whether that recommendation was made?

18 A What I see in para one, point 1 is to update and  
19 modify the tripwire matrix to include a suspension of  
20 operations section. This is not a formal term as ordered and  
21 authorized departure are, for example. As I recall, this was  
22 consistent with our discussion, an option that we discussed  
23 where we would suspend our operations, remain staffed as we  
24 were, and not proceed to authorized or ordered departure.  
25 This was an effort to give us that option and that



1 flexibility in response to events.

2 Q Do you recall where the idea for including a  
3 suspension of operations came from, where did that originate?

4 A I recall I made that suggestion consistent with our  
5 practice. There had been days where we had elected, for  
6 example, not to conduct movements. In many ways, this was a  
7 reflection of practice.

8 Q And just to be clear, when it says here to update  
9 and modify the tripwires to include that section, was the  
10 recommendation of the EAC to move to a suspension of  
11 operations?

12 A As I recall, our recommendation was that we have  
13 suspension of operations as an option, not that we were  
14 recommending that we move immediately to it, but that in the  
15 progression of options, we establish suspension as a step or  
16 as a stage.

17 Q Okay. And how would that tie in with referring  
18 back to Exhibit 5, when you indicate that -- this is the last  
19 representation -- that the group had agreed to meet at least  
20 weekly in the future in light of the pace of developments on  
21 the ground?

22 A Uh-huh. Which, again -- our meetings were  
23 frequent. They were certainly on an informal basis  
24 continuing, and security remained an essential element of our  
25 discussions.

1           Q    You'd indicated in the last hour that you  
2 participated in a drafting of this cable and that in the  
3 normal or ordinary course that the cable would go to Embassy  
4 Tripoli for review. Do you recall what if any input Embassy  
5 Tripoli had into this document?

6           A    I don't recall whether or not there were edits from  
7 Embassy Tripoli in terms of the final text.

8           Q    Okay.

9           BY MS. SAWYER:

10          Q    So tonight, I just want to ask you a few specific  
11 questions about the cable that went.

12          A    Please.

13          Q    Because we've touched on a number of these issues,  
14 and I just want to make sure we've covered them before we  
15 lose you for the day. So --

16          A    I note you did not say lose me forever.

17          Q    Well, I think the hope is that we will have fully  
18 taken advantage of your willingness to come and talk to us.

19          So, I just wanted to direct your attention just for a  
20 moment to that paragraph three. You know, my colleague  
21 mentioned that there were some specifics here and that one  
22 talks about the departure of certain organizations. Down  
23 toward the bottom, and it particularly remarks on the  
24 significance and the departure of the Red Cross, which we  
25 discussed at great length.

1 But then toward the bottom, it does note, and it's  
2 really kind of halfway down that paragraph, "PO stated that  
3 while post has seen some departures from Benghazi, it is  
4 important to note that other organizations, such as the  
5 British Mission, appear to be returning to Benghazi.  
6 Furthermore, some local organizations and human rights groups  
7 appear to be increasing their visibility within town,  
8 including efforts to oppose the recent violence. A broad  
9 range of contacts continue to attach great symbolic and  
10 practical importance to a continued U.S. G presence here."

11 Is the reference to PO, I assume that's principal  
12 officer?

13 A You are correct.

14 Q So then, I assume that would be you?

15 A That would be me.

16 Q Wonderful. So, did that -- what was the  
17 significance to you to make sure that that was, kind of fully  
18 represented within this cable?

19 A I felt my obligation in this, as in all reporting,  
20 was to try to provide a comprehensive picture. I thought  
21 this was germane. I thought that despite -- well, I would  
22 say that there were certainly grounds for concern, and we  
23 demonstrated that concern. However, we were also aware of  
24 other events, some of which, such as the emergence of voices  
25 in local civil society, I regarded to be positive. I

1       regarded to be an important part of Libya's transition. And  
2       I wanted to ensure that we provided a picture that was  
3       accurate and accordingly took into account all the data  
4       points.

5           Q     So, you mentioned when you were answering that  
6       question that in addition to giving a very frank, full  
7       assessment of the security, you wanted to make sure of the  
8       full range. I want to just direct your attention now to the  
9       very next paragraph, which is titled, "Increase In Hostile  
10      Militias." It indicates that there was -- that the EAC was  
11      briefed. [REDACTED]

12     [REDACTED]  
13     [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

14           A     [REDACTED]  
15     [REDACTED].

16           Q     And you had earlier, during our conversation here,  
17      indicated that -- I think the way that you put it was that  
18      Islamist extremism was a particular focus [REDACTED].

19     [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
20     [REDACTED]  
21     [REDACTED]

22           A     [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
23     [REDACTED]

24           Q     [REDACTED]  
25     [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]

3 A [REDACTED]

4 Q [REDACTED]

5 [REDACTED]

6 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED]

8 [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED] So, that information was both conveyed to you and you  
11 broadly conveyed that both to Tripoli, and then that was  
12 broadly conveyed elsewhere?

13 A Yes.

14 Q In that context, in the EAC, [REDACTED]

15 [REDACTED], did they ever say to you  
16 that they would recommend that you go to authorized  
17 departure?

18 A No, I do not recall any such recommendation on  
19 their part.

20 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

22 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

23 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

24 [REDACTED].

25 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED],  
2 [REDACTED]?  
3 A [REDACTED]  
4 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED]  
6 [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
8 [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED]  
10 [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED]?  
13 A [REDACTED]  
14 Q [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED]  
19 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED]  
21 Q [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED]  
25 A I [REDACTED]

- 1 [REDACTED]
- 2 Q [REDACTED]
- 3 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 5 [REDACTED]
- 6 A [REDACTED]
- 7 Q [REDACTED]
- 8 [REDACTED]
- 9 A [REDACTED]
- 10 Q [REDACTED]
- 11 [REDACTED]?
- 12 A [REDACTED]
- 13 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 14 [REDACTED]
- 15 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 16 [REDACTED]
- 17 Q [REDACTED]
- 18 [REDACTED]
- 19 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
- 20 Q [REDACTED]
- 21 [REDACTED]
- 22 A [REDACTED]
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BY MS. SAWYER:

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A Again, security remained the prominent feature of  
all of our discussions

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Q And it sounded like, from what you said, that some  
steps had been taken to actually explore how that could be  
done and making that happen in the future.

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1 A [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]

3 [REDACTED]

4 Q Okay. And then just finally, it does indicate in

5 the cable in that paragraph 8 that there will be security

6 requests, specific requests --

7 A Right.

8 Q -- sent on. Do you know what the status of those

9 requests were at the time you left?

10 A I do not know their status at the time of my

11 departure. Again, technical requests, such as physical

12 security upgrade and so forth, would have gone through DS

13 channels, RSO to RSO.

14 Q So just to wrap up our conversation on this, you

15 know, looking at this, not having been there, but certainly

16 having looked at a number of documents and talked to some

17 folks, it does reflect, in my opinion, a very serious

18 assessment of the situation and a desire to continue that

19 assessment and ensure that it continued. Did you feel that

20 what was recommended here was adequate at the time to address

21 what you felt like the environment was in Benghazi during

22 your time there, at the time you were there?

23 A I felt this was a candid assessment. I felt it

24 reflected our best assessment based on the information

25 available to all U.S. Government agencies as to what we

1 should be doing and how we needed to be doing it, yes.

2 Q And I know I asked very specifically with regard to  
3 [REDACTED]  
4 recommendation for authorized departure. I assume, because  
5 we talked earlier about before you get to ordered, you get to  
6 authorized, I also assume there was no recommendation for  
7 ordered departure?

8 A I don't recall any such recommendation from them.

9 Q Did that recommendation come from anyone who  
10 participated in the EAC?

11 A I don't recall anyone making a recommendation that  
12 we move to either authorized or ordered departure.  
13 Discussion did include a recognition that on this scale of  
14 measures, that we should consider very carefully what  
15 tripwires would obligate us to consider those options.

16 Q And did you feel that or did anyone express that  
17 they felt like sufficient tripwires had been crossed or -- so  
18 that there should be a recommendation at that point in time  
19 to move to authorized departure?

20 A I did not feel that at the time of the EAC, and I  
21 don't recall anyone else expressing the view that they felt  
22 we were at that point at that time.

23 Q Okay.

24 BY MR. KENNY:

25 Q Just a few cleanup matters, then we will conclude.

1 We were just discussing some short-term arrangements for  
2 collocation. There were also discussions about potentially a  
3 longer-term option for collocating. You had mentioned that  
4 there had been an assessment, that there was a visit, site  
5 visit, some sort of site survey that occurred at the  
6 temporary mission facility. Is that accurate?

7 A That's correct.

8 Q In the last round when we were discussing a more  
9 permanent collocation you referred to a specific site, and  
10 you'd also mentioned that you had the right space to do it.

11 A Uh-huh.

12 Q And that it was possible.

13 A Uh-huh.

14 Q Which site -- assume that there were several sites  
15 under review -- but to which site were you referring when you  
16 made those comments?

17 A I felt that both our compound and the property  
18 immediately adjacent had the physical area. I felt that the  
19 adjacent property had a bigger building that would have  
20 offered more residential space. I felt either would have  
21 been a viable option. I recognized that both probably would  
22 have required some modification not only with respect to  
23 security, but also living space, infrastructure, et cetera.  
24 But I felt that both had the potential.

25 Q Okay. And tying that into the discussion about the

1 longer-term presence in Benghazi and where the Department,  
2 where the government was in that process, you had mentioned  
3 that you felt that there would have been discussions at  
4 certain levels within the Department, to include P, to  
5 include M. And we'd just like to ask you, do you have  
6 specific knowledge that the temporary mission facility, the  
7 extension of it was being discussed at those levels within  
8 the Department at the under secretary level?

9 A I understood from Ambassador Stevens that he was  
10 engaged in discussions about this issue with Washington. I  
11 don't recall him specifying the person or persons with whom  
12 he was engaged in those discussions.

13 Q Okay. Did you, during your time in Benghazi, see a  
14 draft proposal for an extension of the Benghazi compound?

15 A At Embassy Tripoli's request, I provided written  
16 input for a proposal. At the time of my departure, I do not  
17 know the disposition of any formal written request.

18 Q Do you recall just generally the content of what  
19 that document was?

20 A I recall emphasizing our unique credibility in  
21 Benghazi, what a long-term presence there would do with  
22 respect to reporting on the political scene, what it could  
23 afford with respect to American citizen services on the  
24 economic side as well, and I recall specifically highlighting  
25 how proceeding with the collocated presence would help us do

1 so in a cost-effective manner.

2 Q So it sounds like you participated in developing,  
3 at least on the policy side, the proposal that was -- that  
4 you forwarded on to the Embassy. Do you recall any input  
5 into the operational side? There was a discussion in the  
6 unclassified setting about having some sort of small but  
7 flexible presence. Do you recall making any recommendations  
8 about staffing levels, to include security personnel?

9 A I don't remember trying to specify a number. My  
10 view was that the mission could be modest, that we should  
11 have the capacity to be supplemented by subject matter  
12 experts from Tripoli or elsewhere to work on specific issues,  
13 but that it need not be an exceptionally large presence in  
14 order to be an effective one. And in fact I thought that a  
15 modest size recommended itself.

16 Q Just to follow up and to be clear, do you recall  
17 seeing any lists or drafts of what the composition of that  
18 small but flexible presence would look like? Was it similar  
19 to the presence when you were in Benghazi in terms of the  
20 overall number of State Department personnel?

21 A I don't remember seeing any such formal  
22 recommendation. I provided input so that one could be made.  
23 And in mine I don't recall specifying X or Y number.

24 Q Okay. And I apologize. We are now going to return  
25 --

1           A     Not at all.

2           Q     Do a little bit of a leapfrog with you.

3           The assessment process that was underway to determine  
4     whether a collocation was possible, you'd expressed your  
5     opinion at that the working level that had been -- or at  
6     least from the viewpoint of those on the ground -- that it  
7     was possible. Do you recall any further discussions, whether  
8     any decisions had actually been made with respect to the  
9     process?

10          A     I don't recall any decisions as having been made.

11         I know that I had provided the input we just discussed. I

12         [REDACTED]  
13         had discussed this option as well. My sense was that this  
14         was an issue that was now the subject of discussion between  
15         Tripoli and Washington.

16          Q     Okay. The individual that you recalled coming to  
17     visit and examine the properties for a collocation, do you  
18     remember, did they assess all the properties that were under  
19     consideration at that time?

20          A     I don't -- they did not visit the adjacent  
21     property, which I did subsequently --

22          Q     Okay.

23          A     -- but did take a close look around the existing  
24     compound.

25          Q     Okay. Do you recall if anyone performed some sort

1 of structural assessment of that adjacent compound?

2 A I don't think we had yet reached the point where a  
3 detailed structural assessment had yet occurred, not in my  
4 time there.

5 Q Okay. And just further to that point, is that  
6 because this is a process that requires some sort of lead  
7 time, that there are multiple stages or steps involved in  
8 preparing for a move like this?

9 A I didn't have the insight to ascribe the timeline  
10 to that or to any other reason.

11 Q Okay. Thank you. We'll go off the record.

12 [Discussion off the record.]

13 [Whereupon, at 5:33 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

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## EXHIBIT 1

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

UNCLASSIFIED

2 of 3

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED  
 Page 1 of 2

From: /  
 Sent: 8/8/2012 6:01:04 AM  
 To: SMART Core  
 Subject: The Guns of August: security in eastern Libya

UNCLASSIFIED  
 SBU



MRN: 12 TRIPOLI 952  
 Date/DTG: Aug 08, 2012 / 080956Z AUG 12  
 From: AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
 Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE  
 E.O.: 13526  
 TAGS: PGOV, KDEM, LY  
 Captions: SENSITIVE, SIPDIS  
 Subject: The Guns of August: security in eastern Libya

1. (SBU) Summary: Since the eve of the elections, Benghazi has moved from trepidation to euphoria and back as a series of violent incidents has dominated the political landscape during the Ramadan holiday. These incidents have varied widely in motivation and severity. There have been abductions and assassinations, but there have also been false alarms and outright fabrications. The individual incidents have been organized, but this is not an organized campaign. What we are going through – and what people here are resolved to get through – is a confluence rather than a conspiracy. The Supreme Security Council (SSC), designed to be an interim security measure, has not coalesced into a stabilizing force, and provides little deterrence. Across the political spectrum, people concede the necessity of a security apparatus that is strong enough to keep peace, but many inherently fear abuse by the same authorities. This debate, playing out daily in Benghazi, has created the security vacuum that a diverse group of independent actors are exploiting for their own purposes. End Summary.
2. (SBU) In response to the widely reported security incidents of the past week, security forces have increased their profile and are now a more visible, though still understaffed, presence on Benghazi streets. Most prominent is Benghazi's SSC, assembled from former members of various militias as an interim security measure. However, even in the assessment of its own commander, Fawzi Younis, SSC Benghazi has not coalesced into an effective, stable security force.
3. (SBU) The absence of significant deterrence, has contributed to a security vacuum that is being exploited by independent actors: Ordinary criminals are able to engage in crimes that are more about profit than politics with relative impunity; car jackings and smuggling are particular concerns. Former regime elements are active because they believe that attacking the Revolution in its cradle will have maximum impact on public opinion. Islamist extremists are able to attack the Red Cross with relative impunity, and UN officials tell us human trafficking is on the rise. Violence at hospitals has become a particular concern, with security guards reportedly walking out after demands for treatment have escalated into shootings. Police in the eastern city of Marj have also staged sit-ins to protest lack of government follow-through on promises made to them as well.
4. (SBU) Though most acknowledge the need, others fear the government's potential strength. But a centralized and professional security force is the future, and contacts across the political spectrum concede that the government needs to

CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED  
 Page 1 of 2

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
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be strong enough to keep the peace (though strongly committed to doing so within checks and balances). This is a long-term prospect the militias regard with suspicion at best. As Benghazi navigates the move from a Transitional Council no one respects to a National Congress no one yet knows, they are clearly jockeying for position in a game that involves public relations and private intimidation. (Comment: A surprising number of contacts here dismiss many of the recent incidents – particularly the bombs that were reportedly discovered and disarmed – as having been engineered by the various security forces to discredit their rivals, to improve their own standing, and to seize prime real estate. End Comment).

5. (SBU) Comment: The SSC has increased its presence in the wake of the most recent string of security incidents in Benghazi. This approach is all authorities can do at present. But it is not clear whether it will prove to be effective. What we have seen are not random crimes of opportunity, but rather targeted and discriminate attacks. Attackers are unlikely to be deterred until authorities are at least as capable. End comment.

Signature: STEVENS

Drafted By:  
 Cleared By:

Approved By: EXEC:Stevens, John C

Released By:

Info:

DEPT OF AGRICULTURE USD FAS WASHINGTON DC RUEHRCROUTINE ;  
 DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DCROUTINE ;  
 DEPT OF TREASURY WASHINGTON DCROUTINE ; DEPT OF JUSTICE WASHINGTON DC  
 ROUTINE ; DEPT OF ENERGY WASHINGTON DCROUTINE ;  
 DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DCROUTINE ; CIA WASHINGTON DC  
 ROUTINE ; CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GEROUTINE ; FBI WASHINGTON DCROUTINE ;  
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## EXHIBIT 2

C05390852

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** [REDACTED] 29, 2012 6:01 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Benghazi Hand-off Notes

This is a living document and I'll continue to whittle away at it, but here's the current draft just so you can begin to immerse yourself in the roiling waters of Benghazi ...

**Contacts:**

I'll leave the ancestral list of contacts on the desk and forward by email my collected biographic notes on the key personalities I've met. Overall, I've found it a rather frustrating place to work, as calls [REDACTED] sages, emails etc. are rarely returned in real time. That said, we have access to a broad range of players here and [REDACTED] always gets her man in the end.

The contact list includes the other members of the very select Benghazi diplomatic community. The Italians, Turks, Maltese, Tunisians, Egyptians, Moroccans, and Sudanese have permanent presences here, and honorary consuls represent the Swedes and Finns. The French are working on a cultural center, and the Brits are scheduled to [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] down, and we stay in close touch with both [REDACTED] [REDACTED] is very well-connected and will always go places where we might otherwise not.) We usually host an informal confab with the Turks, Italians, Brits, Maltese, and UN every other week. I've done this on Thursday afternoons, with the staff serving drinks and snacks. It's a useful exchange of information.

**Security:**

You'll have seen the reporting on the overall environment, which remains unsettled and unpredictable. We've recommended that we remain at full strength of 4 RSOs, but will go down to 2 at least temporarily in the week following my departure.

The Local Guard force strikes me as adequate to watch the perimeter, and the local police have put in occasional appearances as well.

The 4 members of the local QRF are a special case. The QRF was originally retained under a contract with the 17 February militia, and we have continued to operate under its terms although [REDACTED] [REDACTED] are relying on a militia in lieu of the central authorities

We also have the usual concerns re their ultimate loyalties. But they are competent, and give us an added measure of security. For the time being, I don't think we have a viable alternative.

**Management Issues:**

We are treading water here. Both State and the Agency are looking at long-term options for collocation and have had reps from both agencies out here to conduct site surveys, but the tendency has been to conduct triage in the interim. We are, for example, on the fourth visit from an Embassy electrician of my brief tenure because we continue to repair rather than replace equipment.

Blackouts are our most common problem, occurring daily. They are usually brief, but the city has been subject to rolling outages and we tax our generators heavily.

C05390852

On the personnel front, we have just hired a second driver and are hoping that [REDACTED] will stay on after her wedding in November.

[REDACTED] is an intermittent presence, more of a consultant than an employee. He's [REDACTED] always effective at getting us access to players here. He also maintains a direct line to the Ambassador. In the longer term, I think that his responsibilities [REDACTED] should take up more of his time and regularize our relationship.

#### Life Services:

Certainly the greatest daily vexation here. The cleaning and laundry services function seamlessly, but the food is a tragicomic adventure. We have tried a number of approaches, all with minimal success. The food is often inedible, rarely reflects our preferences, and occasionally makes us sick. We've tried submitting recipes, showing them how to cook certain dishes, requesting menus for advance review and revision, banning certain items, and even bringing in an outside chef to give cooking lessons, all with minimal returns. This has become a serious morale issue for folks on longer stints here (as has the long wait for anything more than rudimentary gym equipment from Tripoli).

The contractor is not part of the solution here; their visits are disruptive and do not result in any improvements. Requesting that they change personnel is an option, but we've been through several cooks already and I think the underlying problem is the combination of poor ingredients and poor preparation. If we are to stay on here in the longer term, I think the solution is to move [REDACTED]. As with many other issues, I suspect that we will not address this until we determine what we're going to do here in the longer term.

#### Scheduling:

I've been quite flexible here, as the Ramadan lull demanded, but previous PO's have had regularly scheduled staff meetings. We have had an EAC, and [REDACTED] I've offered to meet periodically with the Municipal Council, but they've not followed through. Ditto the University.

#### Upcoming Visits:

You know about the Ambassador's visit, and I understand PAO will also venture out here in the interim to make sure that the American Corner is ready for the ribbon-cutting ceremony. We're also likely to have the Boston Boys choir in town in September on an ECA-sponsored tour.

#### Travel:

Ramadan cramped my style in this regard, but it would be good to head further east to show the flag, whether in Bayda or all the way out in Tobruk. We've not ventured into Derna and the UN has made it off-limits.

#### Americans:

We do not have a very good handle on how many Americans are in the East. My sense is that it is a rather small number (several hundred), with the majority being minors born to Libyan parents who were studying in the US. But we don't have a formal register, and you'll run into people around town. There are also folks here on various programs funded by the USG (ISN, AID, MEPI, et al) whose activities are not necessarily coordinated through the Mission.

## EXHIBIT 3

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012  
**Date:** Sunday, August 26, 2012 11:24:51 AM

We could definitely do it. I'm sure the university would give us a space if necessary, and if we wanted to go big time we could try something at the theater at Cyrene!

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 26, 2012 10:15 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012

[REDACTED] do you think a band program is something that Benghazi could handle in November? From security, logistic, other perspectives? Of course we would come out to help. I need to give these guys an answer soon.

[REDACTED]

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 24, 2012 10:55 PM  
**To:** Marc Thayer, American Voices; [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** 'Jeremy Idelman'; John Ferguson; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012

Dear all,

Just wanted to check in again as ECA wants to make sure we are doing everything we can to make sure we support a successful tour if feasible. I know American Voices has good connections with musicians in Benghazi, per below, but of course we all understand that safety concerns are paramount.

Hope these dates still work and we look forward to hearing from you,

[REDACTED]

**From:** Marc Thayer, American Voices [mailto:[REDACTED]]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 22, 2012 8:25 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** 'Jeremy Idelman'; John Ferguson; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012

Hi everyone,

Mike, John forwarded your message to me asking about dates in November as well. The 3rd

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through the 7th is really the only time the Boston Boys are available. Egypt has confirmed dates prior and Saudi Arabia is working on visas for the time immediately following. They would travel to Libya on the 3rd and depart on the 7th. I can ask Saudi if they might come a day or two later making the 4th a rest day (election day) and giving you program days on Nov. 5-7.

If you have another band visiting Tripoli the week before might we focus on other areas such as Ben Ghazi during that time?

I'm back in St. Louis and can chat by phone when it is convenient for you, cell is [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] I will be managing this tour and we very much want to include Libya. The Boston Boys are excited to come there as well.

Thanks,  
Marc Thayer

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**From:** [REDACTED]@state.gov>  
**To:** [REDACTED]@state.gov>; [REDACTED]@state.gov>; [REDACTED]@state.gov>  
**Cc:** "Marc Thayer, American Voices" <[REDACTED]@state.gov>; Jeremy Idleman <[REDACTED]@americanvoices.org>; John Ferguson <americanvoices@[REDACTED]@state.gov>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 22, 2012 3:45 AM  
**Subject:** RE: American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012

Hi [REDACTED]  
Can you please confirm the dates? Thanks!

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 16, 2012 11:14 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** 'Marc Thayer, American Voices'; 'Jeremy Idleman'; John Ferguson; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012

Dear Colleagues,

Hope this finds you well. Know it's been a summer of transition and I wanted to make sure that all the right people are looped in on tour prep for this fall's American Music Abroad tour stop in Libya – please do add or correct if I don't quite have the right group copied above.

I know tour manager Marc Thayer is eager to confirm pending details, and to make sure visas are in train, and will be in touch shortly. Would also note per below that Marc could make an advance visit, using existing grant funds, to help with tour planning if that would be useful and if timing would permit.

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All best for now,

■

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**From:** Marc Thayer, American Voices [mailto:■]  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 21, 2012 6:17 PM  
**To:** ■  
**Cc:** John Ferguson; ■; Jeremy Idleman  
**Subject:** American Music Abroad - Boston Boys in Libya, Fall, 2012

Dear ■, ■ and ■,

We were not sure which of you should receive this letter so it's coming to all of you. And when you know your eventual titles we'd love to have that information too please. Who would you like to be the main point of contact in the future?

This is Marc Thayer of American Voices. We will be handling the details of the October-November 2012 American Music Abroad tour with the Boston Boys with ■ and ECA.

Please find in the attached document detailed tour information.

Please find questions we have for post highlighted in yellow. The Libya segment of the tour has been approved for an advance visit as well as to be accompanied by a tour manager (myself) if post desires. This would work best in mid-August as I'll already be in the region.

We are looking forward to working with you on this tour and look forward to any questions you may have. If you would like to set up a Skype or phone meeting to discuss the tour, please advise.

Best regards,

Marc Thayer  
Director of Education  
Association of American Voices

SKYPE: .  
TWITTER: .  
YouTube .

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EXHIBIT 4

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 8/14/2012 2:12:24 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** tripwires  
**Attachments:** Benghazi assessment of tripwires broached as of August 13.docx

**My comments are in yellow in the attached document. Perhaps we can use some of these as talking points in the EAC.** [REDACTED]

**Benghazi assessment of tripwires broached as of August 13, 2012.**

**Events triggering a heightened security posture:**

- Scattered protests regarding the process to draft the Libyan Constitution.
- Significant delays in the formulation of the Constitution, resulting in public protests.
- Significant delays in the new congress' ability to appoint a new cabinet, resulting in widespread, public protests and a halt in government decision-making or services.  
 While we have not seen widespread protests, protests do occur in Benghazi. Most recently, veterans of the revolution took over the Tibesti Hotel, and currently occupy the hotel. The Tibesti Hotel was, until recently, the living quarters and office space of many members of the international community including the United Nations, private sector business, and government delegations, as well as visiting American VIPs. It now stands abandoned, as all guests and staff have left, and the protestors are apparently "squatting" there until their demands are met.
- A sustained pattern of GOL public statements and/or sermons, media content, demonstrations that are anti-American or anti-western in nature.
- Embassy personnel and other members of the expatriate community report strains in relations with members of the local community.
- Confirmed reports of an increased role in Libya of groups with links to Al-Qaeda.
- Sustained increase in the number of checkpoints in/around major urban areas, particularly in daylight hours.
- Armed attacks on political candidates or election commission offices.  
 There has been a spate of attacks/assassinations/kidnappings on former Qaddafi loyalists in the past month. A militia claims to have a kill list with a significant number of names on it they are targeting. Ref. GRPO report.
- An increase in the number and credibility of threats by terrorist groups or former regime loyalists.
- Abrupt replacement, detention or arrest of key Libyan government officials.
- Credible, specific and non-counterable information of a planned attack against U.S. interests.
- Attack on U.S. facilities or personnel, resulting in no injuries.
- An IED was detonated at the front gate of US Mission Benghazi in June 2012, no injuries.
- Attack on a western diplomatic facility in Tripoli or Benghazi.  
 Grenade thrown at UN motorcade in April 2012. RPG attack on British Ambassador's motorcade resulting in injury in June 2012. Additionally, there have been multiple IEDs (June 2011, July 2012) planted at the Tibesti Hotel, former home to the United Nations. The Red Cross HQ, near the US Mission, was attacked twice (RPG and drive by shooting, respectively) in May 2012.

**Events triggering consideration of authorized departure:**

- Demonstrations and incidents of social unrest, including protests related to the election, become large-scale and widespread, with the greater likelihood of violence.
- Sustained fighting among various militias, tribes or factions, particularly in major urban areas.
- Use of armed force by separatist elements against the central government.
- A dramatic increase in violent crime, including looting and home invasions.  
 Benghazi has seen a marked rise in car-jackings of late. The Sudanese Consul General, a victim of car-jacking himself, stated a stolen car market has appeared next to their mission. Anecdotally, sources report levels of violent crime are much higher than before.



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- Small-scale attacks by Qadhafi loyalists, militias, or terrorist elements in or around Tripoli, Benghazi, and major urban areas.  
 Certain militias have become more brazen of late and appear to be acting with little fear of government reprisal. There is a strong sense, based on various reports, that many of the bombings, kidnappings, and assassinations in the past month are linked to conservative militias in Benghazi.
- Major international carriers halt service to Libya.
- Sustained disruption of airport services, inability to land USG flights at Tripoli International or Mitiga Airports.
- Sustained disruption of overland evacuation routes to Tunisia and Egypt.
- Severe shortages of fuel, food and/or a disruption of city water supplies (or any combination of these three factors) due to conflict or sabotage.  
 Power shortages and blackouts (4-8 hours) have been commonplace the last week and a half. Benghazi power station was victim of an RPG attack last week.
- Attempted violent overthrow of the transitional government.
- Assassination of a leading political figure.
- Attack on U.S. facilities or personnel, resulting in injuries.
- Inability or unwillingness of central government/security forces to respond to Embassy emergencies or security needs.  
 Security forces appear unable/unwilling to proactively address US Mission Benghazi security needs. SSC members have not been paid and have ceased showing up at the US Mission. RSO requests for a police presence outside the mission have gone unanswered thus far. Host nation security does not appear to have the ability/desire to prevent/mitigate threats against the mission.

**Events triggering consideration of ordered departure:**

- Armed coup and/or violent overthrow of the transitional government.
- Significant terrorist attack, resulting in mass casualties.
- Outbreak of nationwide hostilities among factions, including hostilities focused on the results of the election or a declaration of secession by one of Libya's three main regions.
- Large-scale, organized attacks by Qadhafi loyalists.
- Hostage-taking of Americans or westerners becomes prevalent in Libya.  
 Hostage-takings/kidnappings/detainments have recently included multiple Libyan nationals (including an Army Colonel), an American NGO worker, and members of the Iranian Red Cross.
- Natural disaster with extensive loss of life, habitable property and collapse of key public infrastructure.
- Inability or unwillingness of central government /security services or militias aligned with the central government to maintain public order or respond to threats/disturbances posed by individual militias.  
 The security services/SSC seem unwilling/unable to curb the recent violence attributed to the militias.
- Response by Libyan security forces to acts of violence, threats of violence, or active surveillance against American or western interests indicates a denial of the seriousness of the threat.  
 Mission opinion is that Libyan security forces are indifferent to the safety or needs of the US Mission. In a recent (likely hostile) surveillance incident outside the mission gate SSC personnel attempted to question the suspects, but had no power to detain them. The subjects left and

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there doesn't appear to be any attempt by security forces to aggressively investigate this incident or the prior attack on the mission. At the very least, information has not been shared with the mission regarding these incidents or other threat information. RSO does not have a host nation security contact to liaise with.

- Election of a government that is hostile to the United States and supports the use of violence against U.S. interests.
- Aggressive attacks against oil infrastructure, resulting in significant curtailment of oil production.

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## EXHIBIT 5

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**From:** Hicks, Gregory N  
**To:** Stevens, John C  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: 8/15 update  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 15, 2012 8:16:39 AM

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FYI. I asked [REDACTED] to send us the draft for review, approval, and release. Greg.

SBU  
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 15, 2012 2:12 PM  
**To:** Hicks, Gregory N; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** 8/15 update

Sorry about that, folks. The power outages here are knocking our satellite connectivity out and we spend much of our time rebooting.

Anyway, we had one reported incident last night of a bomb attack on another Army colonel here in Benghazi. We are working to confirm. The staff at one of the local hospitals has also gone on strike to protest the lack of security.

We convened the EAC today, [REDACTED] to review the situation and our security posture. We'll write up the minutes on the high side, but briefly we:

- Agreed to review/revise the existing tripwires, which date to before the elections, to reflect present concerns;
- Concluded that the situation merits concern and prudent risk management, particularly in light of recent incidents involving internationals as well as locals advocating priority issues such as human rights and women's participation;
- Recommended continued heightened security measures now in place (essential movement, review of all incoming visitors, attempts to get a better handle on the number of USG contractors in Benghazi etc.) ;
- Recommended expansion of some precautionary measures (drills, reduction of any classified materials to a bare minimum, [REDACTED] mapping of areas of particular concern, etc.);
- Agreed to request a number of specific items/actions which we will spell out in the cable; and,

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- Agreed to meet at least weekly in the future in light of the pace of developments on the ground.

Given our small size, there is really no distinction between authorized and ordered departure from Benghazi: if we lose one more person we will be ineffective. With that in mind, we'll try to lay out tripwires which would lead to specific adjustment of our operations in case of contingencies, but I think we are already at a skeleton crew.



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## EXHIBIT 6

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**From:** Stevens, John C  
**Sent:** Monday, August 13, 2012 7:49 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED] Hicks, Gregory N  
**Subject:** RE: February 17/QRF contract

**Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**SMARTCategory:** Working

OK, sounds like a good plan.

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 13, 2012 9:57 AM  
**To:** Stevens, John C; Hicks, Gregory N  
**Subject:** RE: February 17/QRF contract

I think that 2/17 will remain the most significant force on the ground for the coming months, though I think others (the SSC, the army, individual contractors) could do the job. The locals have not raised this with us. Frankly, I don't know that they're even aware of the situation and would doubt that there is a firm policy on this here. Why don't I see what the other Consulates do and see if there is an approximation of a local standard?

---

**From:** Stevens, John C  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 12, 2012 1:05 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED] Hicks, Gregory N  
**Subject:** RE: February 17/QRF contract

Thanks for flagging this issue [REDACTED]. It's one we debated last year, as well, when we initially started using them, although back then it was admittedly more defensible to use a militia b/c there was literally nothing else. Is there any plausible security entity we can rely on to replace Feb 17, or do you think they'll be the force on the ground for the near (ie, through end of year) future? If you think they're "it" for the time being, it seems to me that it would make sense to continue to use them, even though it doesn't square perfectly with our "rule of law" agenda. Of course, that assumes they continue to be loyal and do a good job protecting our compound, and that the SSC or some other more official force doesn't want us to abandon them. We should be in line with GOL policy/law on this. What do the local police and SSC leadership recommend? C

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 12, 2012 5:56 AM  
**To:** Stevens, John C; Hicks, Gregory N  
**Subject:** February 17/QRF contract

We've been wrestling with the following issue and I wanted to put it on your screen:

As I understand it, our contract with February 17 to provide our Quick Reaction Force technically expired with the transfer from the NTC to the National Congress. Although the members of the QRF seem content to stay on even without a formal extension, do we want to think this through a bit?

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Is it the right signal to send to have a contract with a militia rather than a more usual arrangement with local authorities (the SSC? The Army?) to provide our security? Should we try to readjust to a government-government relationship given the political transition?

Assuming we are prepared to continue with the present practice, do we want to maintain the relationship with February 17? They are the most significant force on the ground, but some of the elements under their umbrella have been linked to recent events here. We've also had some static with them as they've tried to dictate the replacement of one of the QRF members.

As with many questions, this keeps coming back to the issue of how long we're going to be here. The status quo is tenable in the short term, but if we are going to be here beyond the end of the year we may want to try to build our own QRF by hiring individuals and training them.

It seems to me that right now we're in a gray area with a force that is neither entirely official nor entirely beholden to us. We can play out the string a bit, but if we want to rethink we have the opportunity to do so with the expiration of the contract.

Happy to discuss further at your convenience.

■

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## EXHIBIT 7

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*"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."  
-- George Santayana, Reason in Common Sense (1905)*

**INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to Title III of the Omnibus Diplomatic and Antiterrorism Act of 1986, 22 U.S.C. § 4831 *et seq.*, (the "Act"), Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton convened an Accountability Review Board (ARB) for Benghazi to examine the facts and circumstances surrounding the September 11-12, 2012, killings of four U.S. government personnel, including the U.S. Ambassador to Libya, John Christopher Stevens, in Benghazi, Libya. A series of attacks on September 11-12, 2012 involving arson, small-arms and machine-gun fire, and use of rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs), grenades and mortars, focused on two U.S. facilities in Benghazi, as well as U.S. personnel en route between the two facilities. In addition, the attacks severely wounded two U.S. personnel, injured three Libyan contract guards and resulted in the destruction and abandonment of both facilities – the U.S. Special Mission compound (SMC) and Annex.

Four Board members were selected by the Secretary of State and one member from the intelligence community (IC) was selected by the Director for National Intelligence. Ambassador Thomas R. Pickering served as Chairman, with Admiral Michael Mullen as Vice Chairman. Additional members were Catherine Bertini, Richard Shinnick, and Hugh Turner, who represented the IC.

The criminal investigation of the September 11-12, 2012, Benghazi attacks, for which the statutory responsibility rests with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), was still underway at the time of this report. The Board enjoyed excellent cooperation with the Department of Justice and FBI throughout preparation of this report. The key questions surrounding the identity, actions and motivations of the perpetrators remain to be determined by the ongoing criminal investigation.

As called for by the Act, this report examines: whether the attacks were security related; whether security systems and procedures were adequate and implemented properly; the impact of intelligence and information availability; whether any other facts or circumstances in these cases may be relevant to appropriate security management of U.S. missions worldwide; and, finally, whether any U.S. government employee or contractor, as defined by the Act, breached her or his duty.

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The Benghazi attacks represented the first murder of a U.S. ambassador since 1988, and took place 11 years to the day after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Ambassador Stevens personified the U.S. commitment to a free and democratic Libya. His knowledge of Arabic, his ability to move in all sectors of the population, and his wide circle of friends, particularly in Benghazi, marked him as an exceptional practitioner of modern diplomacy. The U.S. Special Mission in Benghazi, established in November 2011, was the successor to his highly successful endeavor as Special Envoy to the rebel-led government that eventually toppled Muammar Qaddafi in fall 2011. The Special Mission bolstered U.S. support for Libya's democratic transition through engagement with eastern Libya, the birthplace of the revolt against Qaddafi and a regional power center.

The Benghazi attacks took place against a backdrop of significantly increased demands on U.S. diplomats to be present in the world's most dangerous places to advance American interests and connect with populations beyond capitals, and beyond host governments' reach. With State Department civilians at the forefront of U.S. efforts to stabilize and build capacity in Iraq, as the U.S. military draws down in Afghanistan, and with security threats growing in volatile environments where the U.S. military is not present – from Peshawar to Bamako – the Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) is being stretched to the limit as never before. DS overall has done a fine job protecting thousands of employees in some 273 U.S. diplomatic missions around the world. No diplomatic presence is without risk, given past attempts by terrorists to pursue U.S. targets worldwide. And the total elimination of risk is a non-starter for U.S. diplomacy, given the need for the U.S. government to be present in places where stability and security are often most profoundly lacking and host government support is sometimes minimal to non-existent.

The Benghazi attacks also took place in a context in which the global terrorism threat as most often represented by al Qaeda (AQ) is fragmenting and increasingly devolving to local affiliates and other actors who share many of AQ's aims, including violent anti-Americanism, without necessarily being organized or operated under direct AQ command and control. This growing, diffuse range of terrorist and hostile actors poses an additional challenge to American security officers, diplomats, development professionals and decision-makers seeking to mitigate risk and remain active in high threat environments without resorting to an unacceptable total fortress and stay-at-home approach to U.S. diplomacy.

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For many years the State Department has been engaged in a struggle to obtain the resources necessary to carry out its work, with varying degrees of success. This has brought about a deep sense of the importance of husbanding resources to meet the highest priorities, laudable in the extreme in any government department. But it has also had the effect of conditioning a few State Department managers to favor restricting the use of resources as a general orientation. There is no easy way to cut through this Gordian knot, all the more so as budgetary austerity looms large ahead. At the same time, it is imperative for the State Department to be mission-driven, rather than resource-constrained – particularly when being present in increasingly risky areas of the world is integral to U.S. national security. The recommendations in this report attempt to grapple with these issues and err on the side of increased attention to prioritization and to fuller support for people and facilities engaged in working in high risk, high threat areas. The solution requires a more serious and sustained commitment from Congress to support State Department needs, which, in total, constitute a small percentage both of the full national budget and that spent for national security. One overall conclusion in this report is that Congress must do its part to meet this challenge and provide necessary resources to the State Department to address security risks and meet mission imperatives.

Mindful of these considerations, the ARB has examined the terrorist attacks in Benghazi with an eye towards how we can better advance American interests and protect our personnel in an increasingly complex and dangerous world. This Board presents its findings and recommendations with the unanimous conclusion that while the United States cannot retreat in the face of such challenges, we must work more rigorously and adeptly to address them, and that American diplomats and security professionals, like their military colleagues, serve the nation in an inherently risky profession. Risk mitigation involves two imperatives – engagement and security – which require wise leadership, good intelligence and evaluation, proper defense and strong preparedness and, at times, downsizing, indirect access and even withdrawal. There is no one paradigm. Experienced leadership, close coordination and agility, timely informed decision making, and adequate funding and personnel resources are essential. The selfless courage of the four Americans who died in the line of duty in Benghazi on September 11-12, 2012, as well as those who were injured and all those who valiantly fought to save their colleagues, inspires all of us as we seek to draw the right lessons from that tragic night.

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**EXECUTIVE OVERVIEW**

A series of terrorist attacks in Benghazi, Libya, on September 11-12, 2012, resulted in the deaths of four U.S. government personnel, Ambassador Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty; seriously wounded two other U.S. personnel and injured three Libyan contract guards; and resulted in the destruction and abandonment of the U.S. Special Mission compound and Annex.

**FINDINGS**

In examining the circumstances of these attacks, the Accountability Review Board for Benghazi determined that:

1. The attacks were security related, involving arson, small arms and machine gun fire, and the use of RPGs, grenades, and mortars against U.S. personnel at two separate facilities – the SMC and the Annex – and en route between them. Responsibility for the tragic loss of life, injuries, and damage to U.S. facilities and property rests solely and completely with the terrorists who perpetrated the attacks. The Board concluded that there was no protest prior to the attacks, which were unanticipated in their scale and intensity.
2. Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department (the “Department”) resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.

Security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a “shared responsibility” by the bureaus in Washington charged with supporting the post, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security. That said, Embassy Tripoli did not demonstrate strong and sustained advocacy with Washington for increased security for Special Mission Benghazi.

The short-term, transitory nature of Special Mission Benghazi’s staffing, with talented and committed, but relatively inexperienced, American personnel often on temporary assignments of 40 days or less, resulted in diminished institutional knowledge, continuity, and mission capacity.

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Overall, the number of Bureau of Diplomatic Security (DS) security staff in Benghazi on the day of the attack and in the months and weeks leading up to it was inadequate, despite repeated requests from Special Mission Benghazi and Embassy Tripoli for additional staffing. Board members found a pervasive realization among personnel who served in Benghazi that the Special Mission was not a high priority for Washington when it came to security-related requests, especially those relating to staffing.

The insufficient Special Mission security platform was at variance with the appropriate Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) standards with respect to perimeter and interior security. Benghazi was also severely under-resourced with regard to certain needed security equipment, although DS funded and installed in 2012 a number of physical security upgrades. These included heightening the outer perimeter wall, safety grills on safe area egress windows, concrete jersey barriers, manual drop-arm vehicle barriers, a steel gate for the Villa C safe area, some locally manufactured steel doors, sandbag fortifications, security cameras, some additional security lighting, guard booths, and an Internal Defense Notification System.

Special Mission Benghazi's uncertain future after 2012 and its "non-status" as a temporary, residential facility made allocation of resources for security and personnel more difficult, and left responsibility to meet security standards to the working-level in the field, with very limited resources.

In the weeks and months leading up to the attacks, the response from post, Embassy Tripoli, and Washington to a deteriorating security situation was inadequate. At the same time, the SMC's dependence on the armed but poorly skilled Libyan February 17 Martyrs' Brigade (February 17) militia members and unarmed, locally contracted Blue Mountain Libya (BML) guards for security support was misplaced.

Although the February 17 militia had proven effective in responding to improvised explosive device (IED) attacks on the Special Mission in April and June 2012, there were some troubling indicators of its reliability in the months and weeks preceding the September attacks. At the time of Ambassador Stevens' visit, February 17 militia members had stopped accompanying Special Mission vehicle movements in protest over salary and working hours.

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Post and the Department were well aware of the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks but at no time were there ever any specific, credible threats against the mission in Benghazi related to the September 11 anniversary. Ambassador Stevens and Benghazi-based DS agents had taken the anniversary into account and decided to hold all meetings on-compound on September 11.

The Board found that Ambassador Stevens made the decision to travel to Benghazi independently of Washington, per standard practice. Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as a staffing gap between principal officers in Benghazi. Plans for the Ambassador's trip provided for minimal close protection security support and were not shared thoroughly with the Embassy's country team, who were not fully aware of planned movements off compound. The Ambassador did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. Mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer 2012. His status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.

Communication, cooperation, and coordination among Washington, Tripoli, and Benghazi functioned collegially at the working-level but were constrained by a lack of transparency, responsiveness, and leadership at the senior levels. Among various Department bureaus and personnel in the field, there appeared to be very real confusion over who, ultimately, was responsible and empowered to make decisions based on both policy and security considerations.

3. Notwithstanding the proper implementation of security systems and procedures and remarkable heroism shown by American personnel, those systems and the Libyan response fell short in the face of a series of attacks that began with the sudden penetration of the Special Mission compound by dozens of armed attackers.

The Board found the responses by both the BML guards and February 17 to be inadequate. The Board's inquiry found little evidence that the armed February 17 guards offered any meaningful defense of the SMC, or succeeded in summoning a February 17 militia presence to assist expeditiously.

The Board found the Libyan government's response to be profoundly lacking on the night of the attacks, reflecting both weak capacity and near absence of

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central government influence and control in Benghazi. The Libyan government did facilitate assistance from a quasi-governmental militia that supported the evacuation of U.S. government personnel to Benghazi airport. The Libyan government also provided a military C-130 aircraft which was used to evacuate remaining U.S. personnel and the bodies of the deceased from Benghazi to Tripoli on September 12.

The Board determined that U.S. personnel on the ground in Benghazi performed with courage and readiness to risk their lives to protect their colleagues, in a near impossible situation. The Board members believe every possible effort was made to rescue and recover Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith.

The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference.

4. The Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11 attacks. Known gaps existed in the intelligence community's understanding of extremist militias in Libya and the potential threat they posed to U.S. interests, although some threats were known to exist.
5. The Board found that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. However, the Board did not find reasonable cause to determine that any individual U.S. government employee breached his or her duty.

### **KEY RECOMMENDATIONS**

With the lessons of the past and the challenges of the future in mind, the Board puts forward recommendations in six core areas: Overarching Security Considerations; Staffing High Risk, High Threat Posts; Training and Awareness; Security and Fire Safety Equipment; Intelligence and Threat Analysis; and Personnel Accountability.

#### OVERARCHING SECURITY CONSIDERATIONS

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1. The Department must strengthen security for personnel and platforms beyond traditional reliance on host government security support in high risk, high threat<sup>1</sup> posts. The Department should urgently review the proper balance between acceptable risk and expected outcomes in high risk, high threat areas. While the answer cannot be to refrain from operating in such environments, the Department must do so on the basis of having: 1) a defined, attainable, and prioritized mission; 2) a clear-eyed assessment of the risk and costs involved; 3) a commitment of sufficient resources to mitigate these costs and risks; 4) an explicit acceptance of those costs and risks that cannot be mitigated; and 5) constant attention to changes in the situation, including when to leave and perform the mission from a distance. The United States must be self-reliant and enterprising in developing alternate security platforms, profiles, and staffing footprints to address such realities. Assessments must be made on a case-by-case basis and repeated as circumstances change.
2. The Board recommends that the Department re-examine DS organization and management, with a particular emphasis on span of control for security policy planning for all overseas U.S. diplomatic facilities. In this context, the recent creation of a new Diplomatic Security Deputy Assistant Secretary for High Threat Posts could be a positive first step if integrated into a sound strategy for DS reorganization.
3. As the President's personal representative, the Chief of Mission bears "direct and full responsibility for the security of [his or her] mission and all the personnel for whom [he or she is] responsible," and thus for risk management in the country to which he or she is accredited. In Washington, each regional Assistant Secretary has a corresponding responsibility to support the Chief of Mission in executing this duty. Regional bureaus should have augmented support within the bureau on security matters, to include a senior DS officer to report to the regional Assistant Secretary.
4. The Department should establish a panel of outside independent experts (military, security, humanitarian) with experience in high risk, high threat areas to support DS, identify best practices (from other agencies and other countries), and regularly evaluate U.S. security platforms in high risk, high threat posts.

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<sup>1</sup> The Board defines "high risk, high threat" posts as those in countries with high to critical levels of political violence and terrorism, governments of weak capacity, and security platforms that fall well below established standards.

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5. The Department should develop minimum security standards for occupancy of temporary facilities in high risk, high threat environments, and seek greater flexibility for the use of Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) sources of funding so that they can be rapidly made available for security upgrades at such facilities.
6. Before opening or re-opening critical threat or high risk, high threat posts, the Department should establish a multi-bureau support cell, residing in the regional bureau. The support cell should work to expedite the approval and funding for establishing and operating the post, implementing physical security measures, staffing of security and management personnel, and providing equipment, continuing as conditions at the post require.
7. The Nairobi and Dar es Salaam ARBs' report of January 1999 called for collocation of newly constructed State Department and other government agencies' facilities. All State Department and other government agencies' facilities should be collocated when they are in the same metropolitan area, unless a waiver has been approved.
8. The Secretary should require an action plan from DS, OBO and other relevant offices on the use of fire as a weapon against diplomatic facilities, including immediate steps to deal with urgent issues. The report should also include reviews of fire safety and crisis management training for all employees and dependents, safehaven standards and fire safety equipment, and recommendations to facilitate survival in smoke and fire situations.
9. Tripwires are too often treated only as indicators of threat rather than an essential trigger mechanism for serious risk management decisions and actions. The Department should revise its guidance to posts and require key offices to perform in-depth status checks of post tripwires.
10. Recalling the recommendations of the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam ARBs, the State Department must work with Congress to restore the Capital Security Cost Sharing Program at its full capacity, adjusted for inflation to approximately \$2.2 billion in fiscal year 2015, including an up to ten-year program addressing that need, prioritized for construction of new facilities in high risk, high threat areas. It should also work with Congress to expand utilization of Overseas

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Contingency Operations funding to respond to emerging security threats and vulnerabilities and operational requirements in high risk, high threat posts.

11. The Board supports the State Department's initiative to request additional Marines and expand the Marine Security Guard (MSG) Program – as well as corresponding requirements for staffing and funding. The Board also recommends that the State Department and DoD identify additional flexible MSG structures and request further resources for the Department and DoD to provide more capabilities and capacities at higher risk posts.

*STAFFING HIGH RISK, HIGH THREAT POSTS*

12. The Board strongly endorses the Department's request for increased DS personnel for high- and critical-threat posts and for additional Mobile Security Deployment teams, as well as an increase in DS domestic staffing in support of such action.
13. The Department should assign key policy, program, and security personnel at high risk, high threat posts for a minimum of one year. For less critical personnel, the temporary duty length (TDY) length should be no less than 120 days. The ARB suggests a comprehensive review of human resources authorities with an eye to using those authorities to promote sending more experienced officers, including "When Actually Employed" (WAE) personnel, to these high risk, high threat locations, particularly in security and management positions for longer periods of time.
14. The Department needs to review the staffing footprints at high risk, high threat posts, with particular attention to ensuring adequate Locally Employed Staff (LES) and management support. High risk, high threat posts must be funded and the human resources process prioritized to hire LES interpreters and translators.
15. With increased and more complex diplomatic activities in the Middle East, the Department should enhance its ongoing efforts to significantly upgrade its language capacity, especially Arabic, among American employees, including DS, and receive greater resources to do so.

*TRAINING AND AWARENESS*UNCLASSIFIED



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16. A panel of Senior Special Agents and Supervisory Special Agents should revisit DS high-threat training with respect to active internal defense and fire survival as well as Chief of Mission protective detail training.
17. The Diplomatic Security Training Center and Foreign Service Institute should collaborate in designing joint courses that integrate high threat training and risk management decision processes for senior and mid-level DS agents and Foreign Service Officers and better prepare them for leadership positions in high risk, high threat posts. They should consult throughout the U.S. government for best practices and lessons learned. Foreign Affairs Counter Threat training should be mandatory for high risk, high threat posts, whether an individual is assigned permanently or in longer-term temporary duty status.

SECURITY AND FIRE SAFETY EQUIPMENT

18. The Department should ensure provision of adequate fire safety and security equipment for safehavens and safe areas in non-Inman/SECCA<sup>2</sup> facilities, as well as high threat Inman facilities.
19. There have been technological advancements in non-lethal deterrents, and the State Department should ensure it rapidly and routinely identifies and procures additional options for non-lethal deterrents in high risk, high threat posts and trains personnel on their use.
20. DS should upgrade surveillance cameras at high risk, high threat posts for greater resolution, nighttime visibility, and monitoring capability beyond post.

INTELLIGENCE AND THREAT ANALYSIS

21. Post-2001, intelligence collection has expanded exponentially, but the Benghazi attacks are a stark reminder that we cannot over-rely on the certainty or even likelihood of warning intelligence. Careful attention should be given to factors showing a deteriorating threat situation in general as a basis for improving

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<sup>2</sup> “Inman buildings” are diplomatic facilities that meet the mandatory minimum physical security standards established after the 1985 Inman Report about the 1983 Embassy and Marine barracks bombings in Lebanon. “SECCA” refers to the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999, passed by Congress after the 1998 Nairobi and Dar es Salaam Embassy bombings. SECCA mandated setback and other standards for newly acquired diplomatic facilities.

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security posture. Key trends must be quickly identified and used to sharpen risk calculations.

22. The DS Office of Intelligence and Threat Analysis should report directly to the DS Assistant Secretary and directly supply threat analysis to all DS components, regional Assistant Secretaries and Chiefs of Mission in order to get key security-related threat information into the right hands more rapidly.

PERSONNEL ACCOUNTABILITY

23. The Board recognizes that poor performance does not ordinarily constitute a breach of duty that would serve as a basis for disciplinary action but is instead addressed through the performance management system. However, the Board is of the view that findings of unsatisfactory leadership performance by senior officials in relation to the security incident under review should be a potential basis for discipline recommendations by future ARBs, and would recommend a revision of Department regulations or amendment to the relevant statute to this end.
24. The Board was humbled by the courage and integrity shown by those on the ground in Benghazi and Tripoli, in particular the DS agents and Annex team who defended their colleagues; the Tripoli response team which mobilized without hesitation; those in Benghazi and Tripoli who cared for the wounded; and the many U.S. government employees who served in Benghazi under difficult conditions in the months leading up to the September 11-12 attacks. We trust that the Department and relevant agencies will take the opportunity to recognize their exceptional valor and performance, which epitomized the highest ideals of government service.

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**POLITICAL AND SECURITY CONTEXT PRIOR TO THE ATTACKS**

On April 5, 2011, then-Special Envoy to the Libyan Transitional National Council (TNC) Chris Stevens arrived via a Greek cargo ship at the rebel-held city of Benghazi to re-establish a U.S. presence in Libya. The State Department had been absent from Libya since the Embassy in Tripoli suspended operations and evacuated its American personnel on February 25, 2011, amidst an escalating campaign by Muammar Qaddafi to suppress violently a popular uprising against his rule.

Benghazi, the largest city and historical power center in eastern Libya, was the launching point for the uprising against Qaddafi and a long time nexus of anti-regime activism. It also served as the rebel-led Transitional National Council's base of operations. Eastern Libya (Cyrenaica) had long felt neglected and oppressed by Qaddafi, and there had been historic tensions between it and the rest of the country. Throughout Qaddafi's decades-long rule, eastern Libya consistently lagged behind Tripoli in terms of infrastructure and standard of living even as it was responsible for the vast majority of Libya's oil production. Stevens' presence in the city was seen as a significant sign of U.S. support for the TNC and a recognition of the resurgence of eastern Libya's political influence.

Benghazi was the seat of the Senussi monarchy until 1954, the site of a U.S. consulate, which was overrun by a mob and burned in 1967, and the place where Qaddafi began his 1969 revolution against the monarchy. Qaddafi's subsequent combination of oppression and neglect enhanced the city's sense of marginalization, and its after-effects were felt more widely in the eastern region where a Salafist jihadist movement took root. Jihadis from Benghazi engaged in Afghanistan against the Soviets and took up arms against U.S. forces in the post-2003 Iraq insurgency. Many of them reemerged in 2011 as leaders of anti-Qaddafi militias in eastern Libya.

Stevens initially operated from the Tibesti Hotel in downtown Benghazi. He was accompanied by a security contingent of 10 Diplomatic Security agents whose primary responsibilities were to provide personal protective services. Stevens' mission was to serve as the liaison with the TNC in preparation for a post-Qaddafi democratic government in Libya. By all accounts, he was extremely effective,

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earned the admiration of countless numbers of Libyans, and personified the U.S. government commitment to a free and democratic Libya.

Benghazi, however, was still very much a conflict zone. On June 1, 2011, a car bomb exploded outside the Tibesti Hotel, and shortly thereafter a credible threat against the Special Envoy mission prompted Stevens to move to the Annex. On June 21, 2011, he and his security contingent moved to what would become the Special Mission Benghazi compound (SMC). By the end of August 2011, the walled compound consisted of three sections (Villas A, B, and C) on 13 acres. (Use of Villa A was discontinued in January 2012, when the SMC footprint was consolidated into the Villas B and C compounds, some eight-acres total.)

On July 15, 2011, the United States officially recognized the TNC as Libya's legitimate governing authority although Qaddafi and his forces still retained control over significant portions of the country, including Tripoli. The TNC continued attacking the remaining Qaddafi strongholds, and Tripoli fell earlier than expected at the end of August. The TNC immediately began moving the government from Benghazi to Tripoli. By early September, 21 members of State Department Mobile Security Deployment teams were in Tripoli with the Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in preparation for the resumption of operations of the U.S. Embassy, which Ambassador Gene Cretz officially re-opened on September 22, 2011. From September 2011 onwards, Embassy Tripoli was open with a skeleton staff built on temporary duty (TDY) assignments, to include the DCM and Regional Security Officer (RSO). (The fall of Tripoli took place shortly after Embassy Tripoli lost its assigned staff and bureaucratically ceased to exist, pursuant to Department regulations regarding the length of time a post can remain open in evacuation status.)

Although the TNC declared that Tripoli would continue to be the capital of a post-Qaddafi Libya, many of the influential players in the TNC remained based in Benghazi. Stevens continued as Special Envoy to the TNC in Benghazi until he departed Libya on November 17, 2011, after which the Special Envoy position was not filled. Stevens was replaced by an experienced Civil Service employee who served for 73 days in what came to be called the "principal officer" position in Benghazi. After November 2011, the principal officer slot became a TDY assignment for officers with varying levels of experience who served in Benghazi anywhere from 10 days to over two months, usually without transiting Tripoli. In December 2011, the Under Secretary for Management approved a one-year continuation of the U.S. Special Mission in Benghazi, which was never a consulate

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and never formally notified to the Libyan government. Stevens arrived in Tripoli on May 26, 2012, to replace Cretz as Ambassador.

Throughout Libya, the security vacuum left by Qaddafi's departure, the continued presence of pro-Qaddafi supporters, the prevalence of and easy access to weapons, the inability of the interim government to reestablish a strong security apparatus, and the resulting weakness of those security forces that remained led to a volatile situation in which militias previously united in opposition to Qaddafi were now jockeying for position in the new Libya. Frequent clashes, including assassinations, took place between contesting militias. Fundamentalist influence with Salafi and al Qaeda connections was also growing, including notably in the eastern region. Public attitudes in Benghazi continued to be positive toward Americans, and it was generally seen as safer for Americans given U.S support of the TNC during the war. However, 2012 saw an overall deterioration of the security environment in Benghazi, as highlighted by a series of security incidents involving the Special Mission, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and third-country nationals and diplomats:

- March 18, 2012 – Armed robbery occurs at the British School in Benghazi.
- March 22, 2012 – Members of a militia searching for a suspect fire their weapons near the SMC and attempt to enter.
- April 2, 2012 – A UK armored diplomatic vehicle is attacked after driving into a local protest. The vehicle was damaged but occupants uninjured.
- April 6, 2012 – A gelatina bomb (traditional homemade explosive device used for fishing) is thrown over the SMC north wall.
- April 10, 2012 – An IED (gelatina or dynamite stick) is thrown at the motorcade of the UN Special Envoy to Libya in Benghazi.
- April 26, 2012 – Special Mission Benghazi principal officer is evacuated from International Medical University (IMU) after a fistfight escalated to gunfire between Tripoli-based trade delegation security personnel and IMU security.
- April 27, 2012 – Two South African nationals in Libya as part of U.S.-funded weapons abatement, unexploded ordnance removal and demining project are detained at gunpoint by militia, questioned and released.
- May 22, 2012 – Benghazi International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) building struck by rocket propelled grenades (RPGs).
- May 28, 2012 – A previously unknown organization, Omar Abdurrahman group, claims responsibility for the ICRC attack and issues a threat against the United States on social media sites.

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- June 6, 2012 – IED attack on the SMC. The IED detonates with no injuries but blows a large hole in the compound's exterior wall. Omar Abdurrahman group makes an unsubstantiated claim of responsibility.
- June 8, 2012 – Two hand grenades target a parked UK diplomatic vehicle in Sabha (800 km south of Benghazi).
- June 11, 2012 – While in Benghazi, the British Ambassador's convoy is attacked with an RPG and possible AK-47s. Two UK security officers are injured; the UK closes its mission in Benghazi the following day.
- June 12, 2012 – An RPG attack is made on the ICRC compound in Misrata (400 km west of Benghazi).
- June 18, 2012 – Protestors storm the Tunisian consulate in Benghazi.
- July 29, 2012 – An IED is found on grounds of the Tibesti Hotel.
- July 30, 2012 – Sudanese Consul in Benghazi is carjacked and driver beaten.
- July 31, 2012 – Seven Iranian-citizen ICRC workers abducted in Benghazi.
- August 5, 2012 – ICRC Misrata office is attacked with RPGs. ICRC withdraws its representatives from Misrata and Benghazi.
- August 9, 2012 – A Spanish-American dual national NGO worker is abducted from the Islamic Cultural Center in Benghazi and released the same day.
- August 20, 2012 – A small bomb is thrown at an Egyptian diplomat's vehicle parked outside of the Egyptian consulate in Benghazi.

It is worth noting that the events above took place against a general backdrop of political violence, assassinations targeting former regime officials, lawlessness, and an overarching absence of central government authority in eastern Libya. While the June 6 IED at the SMC and the May ICRC attack were claimed by the same group, none of the remaining attacks were viewed in Tripoli and Benghazi as linked or having common perpetrators, which were not viewed as linked or having common perpetrators. This also tempered reactions in Washington. Furthermore, the Board believes that the longer a post is exposed to continuing high levels of violence the more it comes to consider security incidents which might otherwise provoke a reaction as normal, thus raising the threshold for an incident to cause a reassessment of risk and mission continuation. This was true for both people on the ground serving in Libya and in Washington.

While the June IED attack and the RPG attack targeting the UK convoy in Benghazi prompted the Special Mission to reduce movements off compound and have a one-week pause between principal officers, the successful nature of Libya's

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July 7, 2012, national elections – which exceeded expectations – renewed Washington’s optimism in Libya’s future. Nevertheless, the immediate period after the elections did not see the central government increase its capacity to consolidate control or provide security in eastern Libya, as efforts to form a government floundered and extremist militias in and outside Benghazi continued to work to strengthen their grip. At the time of the September attacks, Benghazi remained a lawless town nominally controlled by the Supreme Security Council (SSC) – a coalition of militia elements loosely cobbled into a single force to provide interim security – but in reality run by a diverse group of local Islamist militias, each of whose strength ebbed and flowed depending on the ever-shifting alliances and loyalties of various members. There was a notional national police presence, but it was ineffectual. By August 2012, Special Mission Benghazi would evaluate the worsening security situation and its implications.

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*"I was at the foot of the wide marble staircase when the breakthrough occurred. Fanatical knife-carrying intruders, bleeding from cuts received as they were pushed through broken windows, ran down the hall. Putting on gas masks and dropping tear gas grenades, we engaged them on the stairs with rifle butts. In seconds tear gas saturated the area. We then moved into the vault, securing the steel combination door, locking in ten persons.... My greatest fear, which I kept to myself, was that gasoline for the generator would be found, sloshed under the vault door and ignited. When after minutes this did not happen, our hearts sank, nonetheless, as outside smoke wafted in and we knew the building had been set afire."*

*-- First-person account of the June 5, 1967 mob siege of the then-U.S. Consulate in Benghazi*

**TIMELINE OF THE ATTACKS****September 11-12, 2012**

*(All times are best estimates based on existing data and should be considered approximate.)*

**The Prelude – the Ambassador’s Arrival**

Ambassador Chris Stevens arrived in Benghazi, Libya on September 10, 2012, accompanied by two temporary duty (TDY) Assistant Regional Security Officers (ARSOs) from Tripoli. It was the Ambassador’s first visit to Benghazi since he departed as then-Special Envoy in November 2011. With the Ambassador’s arrival, there were eight Americans at the Special Mission compound (SMC) on September 10-11, 2012, including the Ambassador; Information Management Officer (IMO) Sean Smith, who arrived in Benghazi one week earlier to provide TDY communications and management support; and five Diplomatic Security (DS) agents (three assigned on short-term TDY to Benghazi – “TDY RSO”, “ARSO 1” and “ARSO 2” – and the two who traveled from Tripoli to provide protection for the Ambassador during his visit – “ARSO 3” and “ARSO 4”). The eighth American, the TDY Benghazi principal officer, completed his 13-day assignment and returned to his full-time job in Tripoli the morning of September 11, leaving seven Americans at the compound. Ambassador Stevens was scheduled to remain in Benghazi until September 14, and his visit was timed in part to fill the staffing gaps between TDY principal officers as well as to open an American Corner at a local school and to reconnect with local contacts.

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In the absence of an effective central government security presence, the Special Mission's Libyan security contingent was composed of four armed members of the February 17 Martyrs' Brigade (February 17) – a local umbrella organization of militias dominant in Benghazi (some of which were Islamist) and loosely affiliated with the Libyan government, but not under its control. They resided in a guest house building on compound. Normally four members resided on the Special Mission compound near the front gate, but on September 11 one had been absent for several days, reportedly due to a family illness. The Special Mission also had an unarmed, contract local guard force (LGF), Blue Mountain Libya (BML), which provided five guards per eight-hour shift, 24/7, to open and close the gates, patrol the compound, and give warning in case of an attack.

After the Ambassador's arrival at the Special Mission on September 10, ARSO 1 gave the Ambassador a tour of the SMC and pointed out the safe area and escape hatch windows in the Ambassador's room in Villa C. Later that afternoon, the Ambassador visited the Annex for a briefing. He then met with the City Council at a local hotel for dinner, an event at which local media invited by the Council showed up unexpectedly, despite U.S. efforts to keep the Ambassador's program and movements from being publicized.

*Security Environment on September 11, Preceding Attacks*

In consultation with the TDY RSO and mindful of the threat environment and the September 11 anniversary, Ambassador Stevens did not leave the SMC on September 11, but rather held meetings there. At approximately 0645 local that morning, a BML contract guard saw an unknown individual in a Libyan Supreme Security Council (SSC) police uniform apparently taking photos of the compound villas with a cell phone from the second floor of a building under construction across the street to the north of the SMC. The individual was reportedly stopped by BML guards, denied any wrongdoing, and departed in a police car with two others. This was reported to ARSOs 1 and 2. Later that morning they inspected the area where the individual was seen standing and informed the Annex of the incident. There had not been any related threat reporting. The local February 17 militia headquarters was informed of the incident and reportedly complained to the local SSC on the Special Mission's behalf. The Ambassador reviewed a Special Mission-drafted complaint to local authorities on the surveillance incident; however, it was not submitted due to the typically early closure of Libyan government offices. Later on September 11, the Ambassador was informed by his Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) in Tripoli of the breach of the Embassy Cairo

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compound that had occurred that day and briefly discussed the news with ARSO 3. The TDY RSO was also informed of the Cairo compound breach by his Regional Security Officer counterpart in Tripoli and shared the information with colleagues at the Annex.

At approximately 1940 local, Ambassador Stevens and an accompanying ARSO escorted a Turkish diplomat to the SMC's main exit at the north C1 gate, where nothing out of the ordinary was noted. Some 30 minutes later, between 2010 and 2030 local, a UK security team supporting a day visit by British diplomats dropped off vehicles and equipment at the SMC (per arrangements made after the UK diplomatic office in Benghazi suspended operations in June 2012). When the UK security team departed via the C1 gate at about 2030 local, there were no signs of anything unusual, including no roadblocks outside of the compound, and traffic flowed normally.

Ambassador Stevens and IMO Sean Smith retired for the night to Villa C at about 2100 local, while ARSO 4 watched a video in the Villa C common space. ARSOs 1, 2, and 3 were sitting together outside and behind Villa C; the TDY RSO was working in the workspace building referred to as the "Office" or "TOC" (Tactical Operations Center), near the Villa B compound, which was connected to the Villa C compound by an alleyway. From the TOC, the TDY RSO could monitor a series of security cameras placed in and around the perimeter of the SMC. The ARSOs were each armed with their standard issue sidearm pistol; their "kits," generally consisting of body armor, radio and an M4 rifle, were in their bedroom/sleeping areas, in accord with Special Mission practice.

*The Attack on the Special Mission Compound*

An SSC police vehicle, which had arrived at the main compound gate (C1) at 2102 local, departed at 2142. The Special Mission had requested that a marked SSC police car be posted outside of the compound 24/7, but in practice a car was there only intermittently. The Special Mission had requested this presence again, specifically for the duration of the Ambassador's visit. A subsequent local press report quotes an SSC official as saying that he ordered the removal of the car "to prevent civilian casualties."

Around the same time, the TDY RSO working in the TOC heard shots and an explosion. He then saw via security camera dozens of individuals, many armed, begin to enter the compound through the main entrance at the C1 gate. He hit the

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duck and cover alarm and yelled a warning over the radio, and recalled no such warning from the February 17 or BML guards, who had already begun to flee to points south and east in the compound, towards the Villa B area. ARSOs 1 and 2 heard an attack warning from the BML guards passed on over the radio. The TDY RSO also alerted the Annex and Embassy Tripoli by cell phone.

The other three ARSOs behind Villa C also heard gunfire and explosions, as well as chanting, and responded immediately along with ARSO 4, who was inside Villa C. Following the SMC's emergency plan, ARSO 1 entered Villa C to secure the Ambassador and IMO in the safe area and to retrieve his kit; ARSOs 2, 3, and 4 moved to retrieve their kits, which were located in Villa B and the TOC. ARSO 1 in Villa C swiftly located the Ambassador and IMO Smith, asked them to don body armor, and led them into the safe area in Villa C, which ARSO 1 secured. He then reported their whereabouts by radio to the TDY RSO in the TOC. ARSO 1, armed with an M4 rifle, shotgun and pistol, took up a defensive position inside the Villa C safe area, with line of sight to the safe area gate and out of view of potential intruders. ARSO 1 gave his cell phone to the Ambassador, who began making calls to local contacts and Embassy Tripoli requesting assistance.

From Villa C, ARSO 4 ran to his sleeping quarters in Villa B to retrieve his kit, while ARSOs 2 and 3 ran to the TOC, where ARSO 3 had last seen the Ambassador, and where ARSO 2's kit was located. (ARSO 2's sleeping quarters were in the TOC, making him the designated "TOC Officer" in their emergency react plan.) ARSO 3, upon not finding the Ambassador in the TOC, ran to Villa B to get his kit; ARSO 2 remained in the TOC with the TDY RSO and shared notification and communication duties with him. At Villa B, ARSO 3 encountered ARSO 4, who was also arming and equipping himself, and the two then attempted to return to Villa C. They turned back, however, after seeing many armed intruders blocking the alley between Villas B and C. ARSOs 3 and 4, outnumbered and outgunned by the armed intruders in the alley, returned to Villa B and barricaded themselves in a back room, along with one LGF member whom they had encountered outside Villa B.

*Attack Continues, Use of Fire as a Weapon*

Sometime between 2145 and 2200 local, armed intruders appear to have used filled fuel cans that were stored next to new, uninstalled generators at the February 17 living quarters near the C1 entrance to burn that building. The crowd

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also lit on fire vehicles that were parked nearby. Members of the crowd then moved to Villa C.

In Villa C, ARSO 1, who was protecting Ambassador Stevens and IMO Smith in the safe area, heard intruders breaking through the Villa C front door. Men armed with AK rifles started to destroy the living room contents and then approached the safe area gate and started banging on it. ARSO 1 did not want to compromise their location in the safe area by engaging the intruders, and he warned the Ambassador and IMO Smith to prepare for the intruders to try to blast the safe area gate locks open. Instead the intruders departed, and the lights in Villa C appeared to dim. ARSO 1 realized that smoke from fires set inside the villa, away from his vantage point, was reducing the light and visibility. (There was no line of sight to Villa C from the Villa B/TOC compound where the TDY RSO and three ARSOs were barricaded. The TDY RSO in the TOC did not see smoke emerge on the view from the camera near Villa C until shortly after 2200 local.)

As smoke engulfed the Villa C safe area, ARSO 1 led Ambassador Stevens and IMO Smith into a bathroom with an exterior window. All three crawled into the bathroom, while the thick, black smoke made breathing difficult and reduced visibility to zero. ARSO 1 tried to seal the door with towels and provide some ventilation by opening the window. Instead, opening the window worsened conditions and drew more smoke into the bathroom, making it even more difficult to breathe. ARSO 1 determined that they could no longer stay in the safe area and yelled to the others, whom he could no longer see, to follow him to an adjacent bedroom, where there was an egress window. ARSO 1 crawled on his hands and knees through a hallway to the bedroom, unable to see, while yelling and banging on the floor to guide the Ambassador and IMO Smith to safety. ARSO 1 opened the window grill and exited the building, collapsing onto a small, partly enclosed patio, at which point he believed he was being fired upon. Immediately following his exit, ARSO 1 realized the Ambassador and IMO had not followed him out the window. He then re-entered Villa C through the egress window several times to search for his colleagues while under fire by the intruders outside. He was unable to locate the Ambassador or IMO Smith, and severe heat and smoke forced him to exit the building to recover between each attempt. After several attempts, he climbed a ladder to the roof where he radioed the TOC for assistance and attempted unsuccessfully to ventilate the building by breaking a skylight. Due to severe smoke inhalation, however, ARSO 1 was almost unintelligible, but the TDY RSO and ARSO 2 in the TOC finally understood him to be saying that he did not have the Ambassador or IMO Smith with him.

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While Villa C was under attack, armed individuals looted Villa B's interior and attempted to enter the area where ARSOs 3 and 4 were barricaded. The intruders carried jerry cans and were seen on security cameras trying to dump them on vehicles outside the TOC, but they were apparently empty. A group of intruders also attempted unsuccessfully to break down the TOC entrance.

*Annex Responds, DS Agents Rally for Further Rescue Efforts*

Just prior to receiving the TDY RSO's distress call shortly after 2142 local, the head of Annex security heard multiple explosions coming from the north in the direction of the SMC. The Annex security head immediately began to organize his team's departure and notified his superiors, who began to contact local security elements to request support. The Annex response team departed its compound in two vehicles at approximately 2205 local. The departure of the Annex team was not delayed by orders from superiors; the team leader decided on his own to depart the Annex compound once it was apparent, despite a brief delay to permit their continuing efforts, that rapid support from local security elements was not forthcoming.

While the TDY RSO continued to man the TOC and communicate with Tripoli, the Annex, and Washington, ARSO 2 used a smoke grenade to obscure his movements from the TOC to Villa B, where he joined ARSOs 3 and 4 who were barricaded inside. By this point, the first group of attackers appeared to have receded. The three ARSOs then drove an armored vehicle parked outside of the TOC to Villa C, where they assisted ARSO 1, who was in distress on the roof, vomiting from severe smoke inhalation and losing consciousness. ARSOs 2, 3, and 4 repeatedly entered Villa C through the egress window, at times crawling on their hands and knees through the safe area due to heavy smoke and the lack of air and visibility.

Near the SMC, the Annex team hoped to bring along friendly forces from militia compounds located along their route. The Annex team stopped at the intersection to the west of the C1 entrance and attempted to convince militia members there to assist. There was periodic, ineffective small arms fire in the team's location from the direction of the Special Mission.

Unable to secure additional assistance, the team moved on to the SMC. The February 17 living quarters and adjacent vehicles were burned, and heavy smoke

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was pouring out of the still smoldering Villa C. The Annex team made contact with the four ARSOs at Villa C. Some Annex team members went to retrieve the TDY RSO from the TOC, while other Annex team members joined the ARSOs in their search for the Ambassador.

During their searches of the Villa C safe area, the ARSOs found and removed the body of IMO Smith with Annex security team assistance. The team checked for vital signs and verified that IMO Smith was already deceased, apparently due to smoke inhalation. Other Annex security team members and the TDY RSO joined up with the ARSOs again to enter Villa C via the egress window but were unable to locate Ambassador Stevens despite multiple attempts. Heat and smoke continued to be limiting factors in their ability to move farther into the safe area. When the TDY RSO attempted to enter Villa C through the front door, the ceiling collapsed. During these rescue attempts, an ARSO received a severe laceration to his arm.

*Second Phase Attack on the Compound, Evacuation to the Annex*

At the urging of the Annex security team and friendly militia members, who warned that the compound was at risk of being overrun, the TDY RSO and four ARSOs departed for the Annex without having found Ambassador Stevens. As the Annex team provided cover fire, the five DS agents' fully armored vehicle departed and took hostile fire as they left the SMC and turned right out of the C1 entrance. The driver, ARSO 1, reversed direction to avoid a crowd farther down the street, then reverted back to the original easterly route towards the crowd after a man whom the DS agents believed to be with February 17 signaled them to do so. Farther ahead, another man in a small group of individuals then motioned to them to enter a neighboring compound, some 300 meters to the east of the C1 entrance of the Special Mission compound. The DS agents suspected a trap, ignored this signal, and continued past. The group along the route then opened fire at the vehicle's side, shattering and almost penetrating the armored glass and blowing out two tires. While the identities of the individuals who fired upon the DS agents is unknown, they may have been part of the initial wave of attackers who swarmed the SMC earlier that night. A roadblock was present outside this compound and groups of attackers were seen entering it at about the time this vehicle movement was taking place.

ARSO 1 accelerated past the armed crowd and navigated around another crowd and roadblock near the end of the road, driving down the center median and

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into the oncoming lane at one point to bypass stopped traffic. Two cars followed, with one turning off and the other following them with its lights off until it turned into a warehouse area not far from the Annex. The DS vehicle then proceeded to the Annex, arriving around 2330 local. There the ARSOs joined Annex personnel and took up defensive positions, to await the Annex security and Tripoli response team. The situation was relatively quiet. Wounded personnel received medical support.

Back at the SMC, the Annex security team at Villa C used small arms fire and took defensive positions to respond to an apparent second phase attack, which lasted about 15 minutes and included small arms fire and at least three rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) launched from outside the C3 gate. With their many and repeated attempts to retrieve the Ambassador having proven fruitless and militia members warning them the SMC could not be held much longer, the Annex team departed the SMC, carrying with them the body of IMO Smith. They arrived back at the Annex and moved to take up additional defensive positions.

*Embassy Tripoli Response*

Upon notification of the attack from the TDY RSO around 2145 local, Embassy Tripoli set up a command center and notified Washington. About 2150 local, the DCM was able to reach Ambassador Stevens, who briefly reported that the SMC was under attack before the call cut off. The Embassy notified Benina Airbase in Benghazi of a potential need for logistic support and aircraft for extraction and received full cooperation. The DCM contacted the Libyan President and Prime Minister's offices to urge them to mobilize a rescue effort, and kept Washington apprised of post's efforts. The Embassy also reached out to Libyan Air Force and Armed Forces contacts, February 17 leadership, and UN and third country embassies, among others. Within hours, Embassy Tripoli chartered a private airplane and deployed a seven-person security team, which included two U.S. military personnel, to Benghazi.

At the direction of the U.S. military's Africa Command (AFRICOM), DoD moved a remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft which arrived over the SMC shortly before the DS team departed. A second remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft relieved the first, and monitored the eventual evacuation of personnel from the Annex to Benghazi airport later on the morning of September 12.

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*Uncertainty on Ambassador Stevens' Whereabouts*

U.S. efforts to determine Ambassador Stevens' whereabouts were unsuccessful for several hours. At approximately 0200 local, Embassy Tripoli received a phone call from ARSO 1's cell phone, which he had given to the Ambassador while they were sheltered in the safe area. A male, Arabic-speaking caller said an unresponsive male who matched the physical description of the Ambassador was at a hospital. There was confusion over which hospital this might be, and the caller was unable to provide a picture of the Ambassador or give any other proof that he was with him. There was some concern that the call might be a ruse to lure American personnel into a trap. With the Benghazi Medical Center (BMC) believed to be dangerous for American personnel due to the possibility attackers were being treated there, a Libyan contact of the Special Mission was dispatched to the BMC and later confirmed the Ambassador's identity and that he was deceased.

BMC personnel would later report that at approximately 0115 local on September 12, an unidentified, unresponsive male foreigner – subsequently identified as Ambassador Stevens – was brought to the emergency room by six civilians. The identities of these civilians are unknown at the time of this report, but to the best knowledge of the Board these were “good Samaritans” among the hordes of looters and bystanders who descended upon the Special Mission after the DS and Annex teams departed. With the clearing of smoke, Ambassador Stevens' rescuers found him within a room in the safe area of Villa C, did not know his identity, pulled him out through an egress window, and sought medical attention for him. Although the Ambassador did not show signs of life upon arrival at the BMC, doctors attempted to resuscitate him for some 45 minutes before declaring him deceased, by apparent smoke inhalation.

*Attacks on the Annex*

Just before midnight, shortly after the DS and Annex security teams arrived from the SMC, the Annex began to be targeted by gunfire and RPGs, which continued intermittently for an hour. Annex security personnel engaged from their defensive positions, which were reinforced by DS agents. Other personnel remained in contact with Embassy Tripoli from the Annex.

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The seven-person response team from Embassy Tripoli arrived in Benghazi to lend support. It arrived at the Annex about 0500 local. Less than fifteen minutes later, the Annex came under mortar and RPG attack, with five mortar rounds impacting close together in under 90 seconds. Three rounds hit the roof of an Annex building, killing security officers Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty. The attack also severely injured one ARSO and one Annex security team member. Annex, Tripoli, and ARSO security team members at other locations moved rapidly to provide combat first aid to the injured.

At approximately 0630 local, all U.S. government personnel evacuated with support from a quasi-governmental Libyan militia. They arrived at the airport without incident. The DoD unarmed surveillance aircraft provided visual oversight during the evacuation. Embassy Tripoli lost communication with the convoy at one point during transit, but quickly regained it.

Evacuees, including all wounded personnel, departed Benghazi on the chartered jet at approximately 0730 local. Embassy Tripoli staff, including the Embassy nurse, met the first evacuation flight at Tripoli International Airport. Wounded personnel were transferred to a local hospital, in exemplary coordination that helped save the lives of two severely injured Americans.

Embassy Tripoli worked with the Libyan government to have a Libyan Air Force C-130 take the remaining U.S. government personnel from Benghazi to Tripoli. Two American citizen State Department contractors traveled to the airport and linked up with the remaining U.S. government personnel. While awaiting transport, the TDY RSO and Annex personnel continued to reach out to Libyan contacts to coordinate the transport of the presumed remains of Ambassador Stevens to the airport. The body was brought to the airport in what appeared to be a local ambulance at 0825 local, and the TDY RSO verified Ambassador Stevens' identity.

At 1130 local, September 12, 2012, the Libyan government-provided C-130 evacuation flight landed in Tripoli with the last U.S. government personnel from Benghazi and the remains of the four Americans killed, who were transported to a local hospital.

In coordination with the State Department and Embassy Tripoli, the Department of Defense sent two U.S. Air Force planes (a C-17 and a C-130) from Germany to Tripoli to provide medical evacuation support for the wounded. At 1915 local on September 12, Embassy Tripoli evacuees, Benghazi personnel, and

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those wounded in the attacks departed Tripoli on the C-17 aircraft, with military doctors and nurses aboard providing en route medical care to the injured. The aircraft arrived at Ramstein Air Force Base at approximately 2230 (Tripoli time) on September 12, just over 24 hours after the attacks in Benghazi had commenced.

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**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

- 1. The attacks in Benghazi were security-related, resulting in the deaths of four U.S. personnel after terrorists attacked two separate U.S. government facilities – the Special Mission compound (SMC) and the Annex.**

Identification of the perpetrators and their motivations are the subject of an ongoing FBI criminal investigation. The Board concluded that no protest took place before the Special Mission and Annex attacks, which were unanticipated in their scale and intensity.

**ADEQUACY OF SECURITY SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES PRIOR TO SEPTEMBER 11, 2012**

- 2. Systemic failures and leadership and management deficiencies at senior levels within two bureaus of the State Department resulted in a Special Mission security posture that was inadequate for Benghazi and grossly inadequate to deal with the attack that took place.**

Through the course of its inquiry, the Board interviewed over 100 individuals, reviewed thousands of pages of documents, and viewed hours of video footage. On the basis of its comprehensive review of this information, the Board remains fully convinced that responsibility for the tragic loss of life, injuries, and damage to U.S. facilities and property rests solely and completely with the terrorists who perpetrated the attack.

**Overriding Factors**

This is not to say, however, that there are no lessons to be learned. A recurring theme throughout the Board's work was one also touched upon by the Nairobi and Dar es Salaam ARBs in 1999. Simply put, in the months leading up to September 11, 2012, security in Benghazi was not recognized and implemented as a "shared responsibility" in Washington, resulting in stove-piped discussions and decisions on policy and security. Key decisions, such as the extension of the State Department presence in Benghazi until December 2012, or non-decisions in Washington, such as the failure to establish standards for Benghazi and to meet them, or the lack of a cohesive staffing plan, essentially set up Benghazi as a

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floating TDY platform with successive principal officers often confined to the SMC due to threats and inadequate resources, and RSOs resorting to field-expedient solutions to correct security shortfalls.

Communication, cooperation, and coordination between Washington, Tripoli, and Benghazi occurred collegially at the working-level but were constrained by a lack of transparency, responsiveness, and leadership at senior bureau levels. The DS Bureau's action officers who worked on Libya are to be commended for their efforts within DS and across the Department to provide additional security resources to Benghazi. Action officers in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' (NEA) Office of Maghreb Affairs and Executive Office showed similar dedication in collaborating on solutions with their DS counterparts and responding to TDY staffing demands. However, in DS, NEA, and at post, there appeared to be very real confusion over who, ultimately, was responsible and empowered to make decisions based on both policy and security considerations.

The DS Bureau showed a lack of proactive senior leadership with respect to Benghazi, failing to ensure that the priority security needs of a high risk, high threat post were met. At the same time, with attention in late 2011 shifting to growing crises in Egypt and Syria, the NEA Bureau's front office showed a lack of ownership of Benghazi's security issues, and a tendency to rely totally on DS for the latter. The Board also found that Embassy Tripoli leadership, saddled with their own staffing and security challenges, did not single out a special need for increased security for Benghazi.

Further shortfalls in Washington coordination were manifested by the flawed process by which Special Mission Benghazi's extension until the end of December 2012 was approved, a decision that did not take security considerations adequately into account. The result was the continuation of Special Mission Benghazi with an uncertain future and a one-year expiration date that made allocations of resources for security upgrades and personnel assignments difficult.

Another key driver behind the weak security platform in Benghazi was the decision to treat Benghazi as a temporary, residential facility, not officially notified to the host government, even though it was also a full time office facility. This resulted in the Special Mission compound being excepted from office facility standards and accountability under the Secure Embassy Construction and Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (SECCA) and the Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB). Benghazi's initial platform in November 2011 was far short of OSPB

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standards and remained so even in September 2012, despite multiple field-expedient upgrades funded by DS. (As a temporary, residential facility, SMC was not eligible for OBO-funded security upgrades.) A comprehensive upgrade and risk-mitigation plan did not exist, nor was a comprehensive security review conducted by Washington for Benghazi in 2012. The unique circumstances surrounding the creation of the mission in Benghazi as a temporary mission outside the realm of permanent diplomatic posts resulted in significant disconnects and support gaps.

### Personnel

The Board found the short-term, transitory nature of Benghazi's staffing to be another primary driver behind the inadequate security platform in Benghazi. Staffing was at times woefully insufficient considering post's security posture and high risk, high threat environment. The end result was a lack of institutional knowledge and mission capacity which could not be overcome by talent and hard work alone, although the Board found ample evidence of both in those who served there. The situation was exacerbated by the lack of Locally Employed Staff (LES) who would normally provide a backstop of continuity, local knowledge, and language ability. This staffing "churn" had significant detrimental effects on the post's ability to assess adequately both the political and security environment, as well as to provide the necessary advocacy and follow-through on major, essential security upgrades.

The Board determined that DS staffing levels in Benghazi after Embassy Tripoli re-opened were inadequate, decreasing significantly after then-Special Envoy Stevens' departure in November 2011. Although a full complement of five DS agents for Benghazi was initially projected, and later requested multiple times, Special Mission Benghazi achieved a level of five DS agents (not counting DoD-provided TDY Site Security Team personnel sent by Embassy Tripoli) for only 23 days between January 1-September 9, 2012.

As it became clear that DS would not provide a steady complement of five TDY DS agents to Benghazi, expectations on the ground were lowered by the daunting task of gaining approvals and the reality of an ever-shifting DS personnel platform. From discussions with former Benghazi-based staff, Board members concluded that the persistence of DS leadership in Washington in refusing to provide a steady platform of four to five DS agents created a resignation on the

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part of post about asking for more. The TDY DS agents resorted to doing the best they could with the limited resources provided.

Furthermore, DS's reliance on volunteers for TDY positions meant that the ARSOs in Benghazi often had relatively little or no prior DS program management or overseas experience. For a time, more experienced RSOs were sent out on longer term TDYs, but even that appeared to diminish after June 2012, exactly at the time the security environment in Benghazi was deteriorating further. It bears emphasizing, however, that the Board found the work done by these often junior DS agents to be exemplary. But given the threat environment and with very little operational oversight from more experienced, senior colleagues, combined with an under-resourced security platform, these agents were not well served by their leadership in Washington. The lack of Arabic-language skills among most American personnel assigned to Benghazi and the lack of a dedicated LES interpreter and sufficient local staff also served as a barrier to effective communication and situational awareness at the Special Mission.

Required security training for DS agents prior to service in Benghazi consisted of the High Threat Training Course (HTTC). However, domestically-based DS agents who had not served abroad did not have the opportunity to receive RSO training before serving in Benghazi. In addition, after April 2012 all personnel scheduled to serve in Libya for over 30 days were required to take the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat (FACT) training. IMOs, who also served as the "management officer" at post, did not, as a prerequisite, receive any basic management or General Services Officer (GSO) training to prepare them for their duties.

The Board determined that reliance on February 17 for security in the event of an attack was misplaced, even though February 17 had been considered to have responded satisfactorily to previous, albeit less threatening, incidents. The four assigned February 17 guards were insufficient and did not have the requisite skills and reliability to provide a reasonable level of security on a 24/7 basis for an eight-acre compound with an extended perimeter wall. In the days prior to the attack and on September 11, 2012, one was absent. Over the course of its inquiry, the Board also learned of troubling indicators of February 17's loyalties and its readiness to assist U.S. personnel. In the weeks preceding the Ambassador's arrival, February 17 had complained about salaries and the lack of a contract for its personnel. At the time of the attacks, February 17 had ceased accompanying Special Mission vehicle movements in protest. The Blue Mountain Libya (BML)

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unarmed guards, whose primary responsibilities were to provide early warning and control access to the SMC, were also poorly skilled.

### Physical Security

Given the threat environment, the physical security platform in Benghazi was inadequate. It is incumbent upon the Board, however, to acknowledge that several upgrades and repairs took place over 2012. DS provided additional funding for the Local Guard Force (LGF), February 17, and residential security upgrades, including heightening the outer perimeter wall, safety grills on safe area egress windows that helped save the life of ARSO 1 on the night of September 11, concrete jersey barriers, manual drop-arm vehicle barriers, a steel gate for the Villa C safe area, some locally manufactured steel doors, sandbag fortifications, security cameras, some additional security lighting, guard booths, and an Internal Defense Notification System. Because OBO does not fund security upgrades for “temporary” facilities, DS also identified non-traditional funding streams to fund physical security upgrades and worked with the IMOs, NEA and Embassy Tripoli to move funds and supplies to Benghazi. The Engineering Security Office (ESO) in Cairo provided strong technical support and regularly visited. Following the June 2012 IED incident, which blew a large hole in the compound wall, DS, OBO, Tripoli, NEA and ESO Cairo immediately responded to Benghazi’s request for assistance. Tripoli identified OBO funds that could be used to fix the wall, and ESO Cairo traveled to Benghazi on June 8 to provide technical support. The TDY IMOs worked tirelessly with the RSOs, Tripoli procurement and financial management staff, and Libyan professionals on statements of work, contracts and funding for the emergency repair of the SMC wall and for the other physical security upgrades, as well as ongoing electrical repairs. New upgrades remained a challenge, however, due to a lack of cash reserves and contract and procurement expertise, which meant Benghazi had to rely on Tripoli for further processing.

The Board found, however, that Washington showed a tendency to overemphasize the positive impact of physical security upgrades, which were often field-expedient improvements to a profoundly weak platform, while generally failing to meet Benghazi’s repeated requests to augment the numbers of TDY DS personnel. The insufficient Special Mission compound security platform was at variance with the appropriate Overseas Security Policy Board (OSPB) standards with respect to perimeter, interior security, and safe areas. Benghazi was also under-resourced with regard to certain needed security equipment.

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Security Planning

Post and the Department were well aware of the anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, although DS did not issue a worldwide caution cable to posts related to the anniversary. Ambassador Stevens and his DS agents had taken the anniversary into account by deciding to hold all meetings at the SMC that day rather than making any moves outside.

The Ambassador chose to travel to Benghazi that week, independent of Washington, as per standard practice. Timing for his trip was driven in part by commitments in Tripoli, as well as a staffing gap between principal officers in Benghazi. His trip had been put off earlier in the summer, and the September 10-14 dates were not decided upon well in advance. The Board found that plans for the Ambassador's trip provided for minimal close protection security support, and that Embassy country team members were not fully aware of planned movements off compound. The Ambassador did not see a direct threat of an attack of this nature and scale on the U.S. Mission in the overall negative trendline of security incidents from spring to summer 2012. His status as the leading U.S. government advocate on Libya policy, and his expertise on Benghazi in particular, caused Washington to give unusual deference to his judgments.

IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES ON SEPTEMBER 11-12, 2012

**3. Notwithstanding the proper implementation of security systems and procedures and remarkable heroism shown by American personnel, those systems themselves and the Libyan response fell short in the face of a series of attacks that began with the sudden penetration of the Special Mission compound by dozens of armed attackers.** In short, Americans in Benghazi and their Tripoli colleagues did their best with what they had, which, in the end, was not enough to prevent the loss of lives of Ambassador Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods, and Glen Doherty. At the same time, U.S. security professionals prevented a further loss of life and helped ensure the safe evacuation of remaining American personnel in Benghazi 12 hours after the attacks began.

As noted in the preceding section, physical security at the Special Mission was insufficient. The SMC perimeter was breached immediately, providing no reaction time to the five DS agents on compound. There was no advance warning regarding the group of attackers approaching outside the SMC prior to the attack,

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and no sign of them on surveillance cameras outside the C1 gate until the attack was underway. The Board learned that, as of the time of the attacks, the Special Mission compound had received additional surveillance cameras, which remained in boxes uninstalled, as technical support to install them had not yet visited post. In addition, the camera monitor in the local guard force booth next to the C1 gate was inoperable on the day of the attacks, a repair which also awaited the arrival of a technical team.

Some aspects of physical security upgrades did perform as intended – in particular, the safe area in Villa C, which prevented intruders from entering and the TOC door, which protected the DS agents from attackers trying to enter. Also, the installation of exits in the window grates of the Villa C safe area allowed ARSO 1 to escape the fire, and those exits were the entry point for him and other DS agents and Annex personnel to make multiple attempts to rescue and recover Sean Smith and Ambassador Stevens.

The Board found the responses by both BML and February 17 to be inadequate. No BML guards were present outside the compound immediately before the attack ensued, although perimeter security was one of their responsibilities, and there is conflicting information as to whether they sounded any alarms prior to fleeing the C1 gate area to other areas of the SMC. Although the unarmed BML guards could not be expected to repel an attack, they had core responsibility for providing early warning and controlling access to the compound, which they had not always performed well in the past. In the final analysis, the Board could not determine exactly how the C1 gate at the Special Mission compound was breached, but the speed with which attackers entered raised the possibility that BML guards left the C1 pedestrian gate open after initially seeing the attackers and fleeing the vicinity. They had left the gate unlatched before.

The Board's inquiry found little evidence that the armed February 17 guards alerted Americans at the SMC to the attack or summoned a February 17 militia presence to assist expeditiously once the attack was in progress – despite the fact that February 17 members were paid to provide interior security and a quick reaction force for the SMC and the fact that February 17 barracks were in the close vicinity, less than 2 km away from the SMC. A small number of February 17 militia members arrived at Villa C nearly an hour after the attack began. Although some February 17 members assisted in efforts to search for Ambassador Stevens in the smoke-filled Villa C building, the Board found little evidence that February 17

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contributed meaningfully to the defense of the Special Mission compound, or to the evacuation to the airport that took place on the morning of September 12.

In contrast, DS and Annex personnel on the ground in Benghazi performed with courage and an overriding desire to protect and rescue their colleagues, in a near impossible situation. The multiple trips that the DS agents and Annex security team members made into a burning, smoke-filled building in attempts to rescue Sean Smith and Ambassador Stevens showed readiness to risk life and limb to save others. They ultimately were unable to save Sean Smith and Ambassador Stevens, due to the intensity of the heat and smoke and a lack of resources, including breathing apparatus. The DS agents' decision to depart the SMC without the Ambassador came after they had all suffered smoke inhalation due to multiple rescue attempts, and amidst a renewed attack that continued as they departed the compound. The Board members believe every possible effort was made to protect, rescue, and recover Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith, and that the bravery of the DS agents present in Benghazi helped prevent a further loss of life, particularly given their assistance in defending the Annex.

The Board found that the lack of non-lethal crowd control options also precluded a more vigorous defense of the SMC. The Board also determined that the lack of fire safety equipment severely impacted the Ambassador's and Sean Smith's ability to escape the deadly smoke conditions. On the other hand, the DS agents' tactical driving training, as well as their fully-armored vehicle, saved their lives when they were attacked by weapons fire en route from the SMC to the Annex. In addition, the DS emergency medical training and the DS-issued personal medical kit saved an ARSO's life after he was severely injured by a mortar attack at the Annex.

The Board found the Libyan government's response to be profoundly lacking on the night of the attacks, reflecting both weak capacity and a near total absence of central government influence in Benghazi. The Libyan government did facilitate assistance from a quasi-governmental militia that supported the evacuation of U.S. government personnel to Benghazi airport. It also facilitated the departure of the charter plane carrying the Tripoli rescue team to Benghazi, and provided a Libyan Air Force C-130 that was used to evacuate remaining personnel and the bodies of the deceased from Benghazi on the morning of September 12.

Washington-Tripoli-Benghazi communication, cooperation, and coordination on the night of the attacks were effective, despite multiple channels of

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communication among Washington, Tripoli, Benghazi, and AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, as well as multiple channels of communication within Washington itself. Embassy Tripoli served as a lifeline to Benghazi throughout the attacks, marshalling support from Washington, Stuttgart and elsewhere, including quickly organizing the charter plane that sent the seven-person reinforcement team to Benghazi. At the direction of AFRICOM, DoD moved a remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft to Benghazi, which arrived over the SMC shortly before the DS team departed. A second remotely piloted, unarmed surveillance aircraft relieved the first, and monitored the eventual evacuation of personnel from the Annex to Benghazi airport later on the morning of September 12.

Embassy Tripoli staff showed absolute dedication and teamwork in mobilizing to respond to the crisis, with the DCM, DATT, Political, and other country team sections reaching out to a wide range of contacts in Tripoli and Benghazi to secure support; the Public Affairs team monitoring social media sites and recording a log of Mission calls; the Embassy nurse providing invaluable guidance on caring for the wounded evacuated from Benghazi; and a Consular officer donating blood that helped save the life of a wounded colleague. Throughout the crisis, the Acting NEA Assistant Secretary provided crucial leadership guidance to Embassy Tripoli's DCM, and Embassy Tripoli's RSO offered valuable counsel to the DS agents in Benghazi.

The interagency response was timely and appropriate, but there simply was not enough time given the speed of the attacks for armed U.S. military assets to have made a difference. Senior-level interagency discussions were underway soon after Washington received initial word of the attacks and continued through the night. The Board found no evidence of any undue delays in decision making or denial of support from Washington or from the military combatant commanders. Quite the contrary: the safe evacuation of all U.S. government personnel from Benghazi twelve hours after the initial attack and subsequently to Ramstein Air Force Base was the result of exceptional U.S. government coordination and military response and helped save the lives of two severely wounded Americans. In addition, at the State Department's request, the Department of Defense also provided a Marine FAST (Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team) as additional security support for Embassy Tripoli on September 12.

Overall, communication systems on the night of the attacks worked, with a near-constant information flow among Benghazi, Tripoli, and Washington. Cell phones were the main method of contact, but lacked redundancy. Radio

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communications between the Annex and the SMC also worked well, thanks to prior coordination between the two.

Shortly after receiving the initial notification from Embassy Tripoli at approximately 1545 EST, the State Department Operations Center notified the interagency, including the White House, of the Special Mission attack by secure conference call and email alerts. The Operations Center and the Diplomatic Security Command Center (DSCC) were exemplary in eliciting information from Tripoli- and Benghazi-based colleagues without overloading them.

IMPACT OF INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION AVAILABILITY

**4. The Board found that intelligence provided no immediate, specific tactical warning of the September 11 attacks. Known gaps existed in the intelligence community's understanding of extremist militias in Libya and the potential threat they posed to U.S. interests, although some threats were known to exist.**

Terrorist networks are difficult to monitor, and the Board emphasizes the conclusion of previous accountability review boards that vulnerable missions cannot rely on receiving specific warning intelligence. Similarly, the lack of specific threat intelligence does not imply a lessening of probability of a terrorist attack. The Board found that there was a tendency on the part of policy, security and other U.S. government officials to rely heavily on the probability of warning intelligence and on the absence of specific threat information. The result was possibly to overlook the usefulness of taking a hard look at accumulated, sometimes circumstantial information, and instead to fail to appreciate threats and understand trends, particularly based on increased violence and the targeting of foreign diplomats and international organizations in Benghazi. The latter information failed to come into clear relief against a backdrop of the lack of effective governance, widespread and growing political violence and instability and the ready availability of weapons in eastern Libya. There were U.S. assessments that provided situational awareness on the persistent, general threat to U.S. and Western interests in eastern Libya, including Benghazi. Board members, however, were struck by the lack of discussion focused specifically on Benghazi.

Benghazi's threat environment had been generally deteriorating since the "gelatina" bomb was thrown over the SMC fence on April 6, but was not judged to have reached a critical point before September 11. The July 7 elections, about

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which there had been some trepidation regarding the security situation, passed with less violence than expected and were followed by Ramadan, when incidents are usually lower. Before September 11, a patchwork of militias in Benghazi had assumed many, if not all, of the security functions normally associated with central government organs, as the government had little authority or reach in Benghazi. There seemed to be no attempt, however, to link formally the many anti-Western incidents in Benghazi, the general declarations of threat in U.S. assessments and a proliferation of violence-prone and little understood militias, the lack of any central authority and a general perception of a deteriorating security environment to any more specific and timely analysis of the threat to U.S. government facilities.

Board members found that there was little understanding of militias in Benghazi and the threat they posed to U.S. interests. One prime factor behind this knowledge gap was that eastern Libya is home to many militias, which are constantly dissolving, splitting apart and reforming. Furthermore, many individuals are associated with more than one militia. Understanding of February 17, in particular, was further limited by the fact that it is an umbrella organization, made up of many different militias with differing ideologies, some of which are extremist in nature.

The Board determined there were no warnings from Libyan interlocutors.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF PERSONNEL

- 5. The Board found that certain senior State Department officials within two bureaus in critical positions of authority and responsibility in Washington demonstrated a lack of proactive leadership and management ability** appropriate for the State Department's senior ranks in their responses to security concerns posed by Special Mission Benghazi, given the deteriorating threat environment and the lack of reliable host government protection. However, the Board did not find that any individual U.S. Government employee engaged in misconduct or willfully ignored his or her responsibilities, and, therefore did not find reasonable cause to believe that an individual breached his or her duty so as to be the subject of a recommendation for disciplinary action.

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## EXHIBIT 8

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

[REDACTED]  

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 14, 2012 4:23 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: NDF Guidance to Benghazi Contractor

[REDACTED]  
Sigh. We have had no contact with these folks and had no idea they were even here. It will be hard to make the argument that we need to maintain our presence here to coordinate USG efforts if we can't do better in connecting the dots.

But I'm not bitter. I, do however, have questions. What, precisely, is their chain of command? Are they under CoM authority? Perhaps most importantly, what precedent does this establish? Putting aside whether I agree with their decision, if their drawdown was coordinated with/approved by the Embassy (as the email chain indicates), are we now obligated to proactively advise other USG contractors here? What do we say if other contractors inquire? Are MEPI and others free to pull the plug on their programs here?

I'll discuss further in the morning call.

Tx, [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 14, 2012 12:58 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** NEA-LIBYADESK; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: NDF Guidance to Benghazi Contractor

[REDACTED]  
Many thanks. Looping in Benghazi principal officer [REDACTED], as I did not see him anywhere on the attached thread.

Is CDI keeping male contractors in place at Benghazi HQ?

Thanks,  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]@ndf.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 13, 2012 6:32 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** NEA-LIBYADESK  
**Subject:** NDF Guidance to Benghazi Contractor

[REDACTED]  
For your situational awareness — not sure if PM/WRA has passed this information to you. Do to the deteriorating security in and around Benghazi, we have authorized our MANPADS contractor in Benghazi to take the steps listed below. This decision was made with the assistance and concurrence of the Embassy [REDACTED]. Attached is the email thread with the discussion for your reference.

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(FYI -- CDI is NDF's contractor, GOP is the subcontractor operating in and around Benghazi. The weapons elimination teams are designated Alpha, Bravo, Charlie and Delta. )

1. The four (4) women working in the Benghazi headquarters are to be demobilized out of Country immediately due to their exposure, not only as Westerners, but as women who are, by local definition, non-compliant with Sharia requirements for females.
2. Demobilize personnel who have young families at home so as not to put those family units at risk should problems escalate against our Expatriate personnel.
3. Allow any of the subcontractors' personnel who are "uncomfortable" with the security situation in Benghazi to demobilize.
4. Those members of your GOP team who are currently on leave (out of Country) are not to remobilize to Libya.
5. Shut down the two (2) Alpha Houses and the Charlie House which are located in the center of Benghazi, relocating personnel staying there to the main GOP compound which is in a quieter area and more secure.
6. Leave the Delta Group in Tobruk for the time being to respond to the meeting on Monday where it is believed they may be given authority to proceed with the local Tobruk Government's request of the MoD in Tripoli that GOP forces relocate arms/munitions from ASA No. 24 (which is at risk) to ASA No. 23 (which is more secure), while carrying out inventory and destroying high value weapons and unstable munitions made available to you by local authorities for such destruction.

Just wanted to be sure you knew that we are aware of the security situation in Benghazi and are taking precautions. We do not expect the above actions will significantly impact our weapons inventory operations. The GOP contract was nearing its end and they were about to begin demobilization soon anyway. Let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

■



U.S. Department of State

Office: [REDACTED]

Mobile: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: [REDACTED]

## EXHIBIT 9

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Page 1 of 2

From:  
 Sent: 8/16/2012 11:01:07 AM  
 To: svcSMARTHBTSP06  
 Subject: US MISSION BENGHAZI EMERGENCY ACTION COMMITTEE- AUGUST 16, 2012

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 Sensitive



MRN: 12 TRIPOLI 55  
 Date/DTG: Aug 16, 2012 / 161501Z AUG 12  
 From: AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI  
 Action: WASHDC, SECSTATE ROUTINE  
 E.O.: 13526  
 TAGS: ASEC, LY  
 Captions: SENSITIVE, SIPDIS, NOFORN  
 Subject: US MISSION BENGHAZI EMERGENCY ACTION COMMITTEE- AUGUST 16, 2012

1. (U) SUMMARY: On August 15, 2012, the U.S. Mission Benghazi Principal Officer (PO) convened the Emergency Action Committee (EAC) to evaluate Post's tripwires in light of the deteriorating security situation in Benghazi. The EAC discussed: (1) the increase in violent incidents in Benghazi, (2) the departure of private and public sector organizations, (3) the rise of potentially anti-western militias, and (4) host nation security capabilities in response to these issues. The EAC resolved to: (1) update and modify the tripwire matrix to include a "suspension of operations" section, (2) [REDACTED] and (3) submit additional equipment/manpower needs to US Embassy Tripoli for review. The EAC was chaired by the PO and attended by RSO, [REDACTED]
2. (U) DETERIORATING SECURITY SITUATION: The PO remarked that the security situation in Benghazi was "trending negatively" and post was witnessing a variety of other groups attempting to fill the security vacuum created by the absence of professional security forces under the control of the central government. Some of these groups, to include the police force and Western-friendly militias, have attempted to rein in the violence, while others, such as criminal elements and Islamist militias, are instigating, if not perpetrating, this violence. The PO opined that this daily pattern of violence would be the "new normal" for the foreseeable future, particularly given the minimal capabilities of organizations such as the Supreme Security Council and local police.
3. (U) DEPARTURE OF ORGANIZATIONS FROM BENGHAZI: RSO remarked that various organizations had either recently reduced their staffing levels or left Benghazi due to the security environment, most notably the International Red Cross and a USG contractor (demobilizing prior to contract termination on 9/20). Also, official organizations (United Nations, Government of Qatar) and private businesses (Blue Mountain Libya) that operated out of the Tibesti Hotel have moved to other locations in the city due to a combination of bombings targeting the hotel and protestors taking over the facility. PO stated that while Post has seen some departures from Benghazi, it is important to note that other organizations, such as the British Mission, appear to be returning to Benghazi. Furthermore, some local organizations and human rights groups appear to be increasing their visibility within town, including efforts to oppose the recent violence. A broad range of contacts continue to attach great symbolic and practical importance to a continued USG presence here.
4. (S/NF) INCREASE IN HOSTILE MILITIAS: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] RSO noted that the Benghazi militias have become more brazen in their actions and have little fear of reprisal from the GoL. (RSO note: RSO has mapped the location of the militias to assist in route planning of essential movements.)

5. (S/NF) HOST NATION SECURITY SUPPORT: RSO and PO expressed concerns with the lack of host nation security support to the US Mission. The SSC no longer provides an armed presence at the mission, and RSO requests to provide a daily police presence have gone unanswered. [REDACTED]

6. (C) TRIPWIRE REVISIONS: PO will revise Post's tripwires to better reflect current concerns. The Mission will also maintain its heightened security posture, to include restrictions on non-essential movements and careful review of all travel requests. In addition, as Post is staffed solely with mission critical personnel, and cannot draw down further while remaining operational, PO suggested the tripwire matrix include a "suspended operations" option. Under this option, all movements would be curtailed, and Post would conduct business only from the compound. There is precedent for this option; post went to a "suspended operations" posture after the June 2012 attack on the mission.

7. (S/NF) [REDACTED]

8. (U) SECURITY REQUESTS FOR EMBASSY REVIEW: In light of the uncertain security environment, US Mission Benghazi will submit specific requests to US Embassy Tripoli for additional physical security upgrades and staffing needs by separate cover.

9. (U) Point of contact is RSO [REDACTED] who can be reached at [REDACTED]@state.gov, or local cell [REDACTED]

Signature: Stevens

Classified By:  
Derived From: DSCG 11-01  
Declassify On: 2037/08/16  
Drafted By:  
Cleared By:

Approved By: Embassy Tripoli: Stevens, J. Christopher  
Released By:  
Info:

Action Post:  
Dissemination Rule: Archive Copy

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Page 2 of 2

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# **INTERVIEW OF DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #5**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, APRIL 1, 2015

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

PHILIP G. KIKO, *Staff Director and General Counsel*

SHARON JACKSON, *Deputy Chief Counsel*

SARA BARRINEAU, *Investigator*

BRIEN A. BEATTIE, *Investigator*

SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*

HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*

PETER KENNY, *Minority Senior Counsel*

FOR \* \* \*

RAEKA SAFAI

FOR THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CATHERINE DUVAL, *Senior Advisor*

1           Ms. Jackson. Good morning, everyone. This is a  
2           transcribed interview being conducted by the Select Committee  
3           on Benghazi, which was authorized by House Resolution 567 of  
4           the 113th Congress and reauthorized by House Resolution 5 of  
5           the 114th Congress.

6           Agent [REDACTED], we greatly appreciate your coming in and  
7           being with us today. As you are well aware, we are talking  
8           to several people from the State Department, but certainly  
9           wanted to include you in that because, you know, very serious  
10          matters and you have a very unique perspective to bring to  
11          members of this committee. And so we greatly appreciate your  
12          willingness to come and talk with us today.

13          This is a voluntary interview that is being conducted.  
14          It is being transcribed, which means we are recording the  
15          procedures here today.

16          But again, we met earlier, but my name is Sharon  
17          Jackson. I am one of the counsel for the majority staff of  
18          the committee. And we are going to take a moment and go  
19          around the room and have everyone introduce themselves just  
20          so you get an idea of who we all are. There will be no quiz  
21          at the end regarding names or anything like that. But I'll  
22          start with Congressman Westmoreland.

23          Mr. Westmoreland. Lynn Westmoreland. I represent  
24          Georgia's Third Congressional District.

25          Ms. Barrineau. I'm Sara Barrineau with the majority

1 staff.

2 Ms. Jackson. Heather.

3 Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer with the minority staff.

4 Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority staff.

5 Ms. Jackson. Brien.

6 Mr. Beattie. Brien Beattie with the majority staff.

7 Mr. Kiko. Phil Kiko with the majority.

8 Ms. Jackson. And you are here with counsel today, is  
9 that correct?

10 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

11 Ms. Jackson. And your counsel is next to you?

12 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

13 Ms. Jackson. And who is that?

14 Mr. [REDACTED] Raeka Safai.

15 Ms. Jackson. And also Kate Duval from the State  
16 Department legal advisor's office is also present here today?

17 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

18 Ms. Jackson. All right. I just wanted to go over sort  
19 of the process that we are going to follow today and give you  
20 an idea of what to expect. I'm sure you've talked with  
21 counsel about that, but it's always good just to elaborate  
22 today.

23 Generally, we question in 1-hour increments. I will ask  
24 questions for up to an hour, and then I will turn it over to  
25 the minority staff, and they have up to an hour to do

1       questioning. We may adjust that a little bit today. We may  
2       go a little longer than an hour or I may continue questioning  
3       for a while. We conferred yesterday, and we just, you know,  
4       don't want to interrupt the flow of questions. So we are  
5       going to be cognizant of the hour, but if we're finishing a  
6       topic, we may go just a little bit longer before we turn it  
7       over.

8               In the event that you have ever testified in federal or  
9       state court before in the course of your career as a federal  
10      law enforcement officer, this is going to be a little  
11      different. There are no rules of evidence. We can ask about  
12      your opinion, hypotheticals, things like that. The only sort  
13      of evidentiary objection that we recognize is one for  
14      privilege. So attorney-client privilege, things like that.  
15      So foundational objections don't apply here. And so if there  
16      is something that you think calls for a privileged answer,  
17      you or your counsel can raise that. We can't raise it. The  
18      other side can't raise it. But then the chairman would  
19      review that and decide whether the question should be  
20      answered or not.

21             We are in a classified setting. I believe everyone here  
22      is up to the TS level. I anticipate that we will not go, if  
23      we go at all, above a secret level. As you have talked in  
24      other settings, do you believe that any answer or any issue  
25      regarding Benghazi would go above the secret level?

1           Mr. [REDACTED] No.

2           Ms. Jackson. So we should be well suited to be in this  
3           venue. So we are going to proceed in a classified setting  
4           here today, although the transcript will be reviewed for  
5           classification. So just because we are conducting it doesn't  
6           mean that the interview transcript will be protected in any  
7           additional way except for those portions that are later  
8           determined to contain classified information, if there are  
9           any of those settings.

10          You have come with counsel today. You are free to  
11          consult with your counsel at any time. As we understand, you  
12          have also requested a State Department legal advisor to be  
13          here, even though they are not your counsel. Is that  
14          correct?

15          Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

16          Ms. Jackson. Okay. So if at any time during the  
17          process you want to take a break and confer with counsel,  
18          just let us know. We will give you every opportunity that  
19          you need to do that.

20          Along the same lines, should you need to take a break at  
21          any time, if we run out of bottles of water, we will  
22          certainly stop the proceedings and get more water. But if  
23          you just need a comfort break or anything, just let us know.  
24          We tend to break after about the first hour just because  
25          that's a convenient time to do it. Everybody needs to have a



1        comfort break, stretch their legs a little bit, and then  
2        reconvene.

3            As you see, we have an official reporter here who is  
4        taking down everything that is said. So as you may know from  
5        ever testifying in federal court, it's very important that we  
6        don't talk over each other, that I finish my questions before  
7        you start an answer, and that I let you finish an answer  
8        before I start a question. That just makes the court  
9        reporters or the official reporters extraordinarily happy  
10       that they don't have to try and get everything down when we  
11       are all talking at the same time.

12           Along those same lines, it is also important to give  
13        verbal answers. We sometimes nod, shake our head, things  
14        like that, and that is very difficult for the reporter to get  
15        down, for them to concentrate on what they are doing and  
16        watch the witness at the same time. So I invite the official  
17        reporter to speak up if either one of us does that and give  
18        nonverbal answers to anything so that they can get everything  
19        down. I also give the reporter permission to tell us to slow  
20        down if we start talking too fast.

21           We are being joined by one of my colleagues, Sheria  
22        Clarke, who is an additional counsel on the majority staff,  
23        and I'm glad she was able to get here before we got started  
24        this morning.

25           The other thing that we ask, as I'm sure you're well

1 aware, is that you give us your best and fullest recollection  
2 of the events that we are going to talk about today. We  
3 understand that time has passed, so some of these in your  
4 memory may be not as clear as it was early on. But we ask  
5 that you, you know, go back and give us as best, full, and  
6 complete and truthful answers that you can.

7 And if you don't know the answer to something or can't  
8 recall the answer to something, but there were other people  
9 present, or others who might have knowledge, if you could  
10 give us that elaboration as to others who may remember if you  
11 don't.

12 But obviously, if you can't remember or don't know the  
13 answer to something, simply tell us that. We are just here  
14 to get the complete picture. None of us were there with you,  
15 and so we can only ask that you recreate for us what happened  
16 to you and the others.

17 As with anything in your line of work, being a federal  
18 law enforcement agent, you know that giving false material  
19 testimony or false material statements could lend you to a  
20 prosecution for perjury or making a false statement. Do you  
21 understand that?

22 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

23 Ms. Jackson. Okay. Do you realize that that applies to  
24 congressional committees?

25 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

1           Ms. Jackson. Okay. And it applies to questions posed  
2 by the staff of congressional committees also?

3           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

4           Ms. Jackson. Okay. Is there any reason as you sit here  
5 today that you would not be able to give truthful testimony  
6 to this committee?

7           Mr. [REDACTED] No.

8           Ms. Jackson. Okay.

9           Heather, anything from the minority staff?

10          Ms. Sawyer. Yeah, just briefly.

11          Good morning. Welcome. Thank you for joining us today.  
12 Your counsel has conveyed to the committee on your behalf  
13 three requests. One was to have a State Department  
14 representative present. One was to proceed in a classified  
15 setting. And the third was to have a representative from the  
16 Department of Justice present to help the committee  
17 understand when we are getting into potential questions that  
18 would be sensitive for law enforcement purposes.

19          The ranking member supported all three of those  
20 requests. Two have been granted by the chairman, and we are  
21 grateful that he decided to grant those. So we will proceed  
22 in a classified setting and you have a State Department  
23 representative here.

24          The ranking member continues to support the request to  
25 have the Justice Department here. The ranking member doesn't

1 feel that would interfere in any way with this investigation  
2 and he is very concerned that we not do anything that might  
3 interfere with law enforcement efforts.

4 We will, of course, proceed sensitively to try to ensure  
5 to the best that we can that we not do so, but I just wanted  
6 to reiterate for the record the ranking member's support for  
7 that request as well.

8 Ms. Jackson. Okay. Thank you.

9 I would like to add one more thing, and that both sides,  
10 both majority and the minority -- I believe I can speak to  
11 the minority -- understand that your and other agents and  
12 other individuals who work for the State Department, your  
13 personal safety is very important to us. And we will  
14 undertake steps to ensure that to the best of our ability,  
15 that we protect both your identity and in any official report  
16 that may come out down the road. We are not here to put you  
17 or others at risk in any way and are sensitive to those  
18 issues. So you have the assurance, I believe, of this entire  
19 committee that we will take those steps. Okay.

20 Do you have any questions for us before we begin?

21 Mr. [REDACTED] No.

22 Ms. Jackson. Okay. Then I note that the time is  
23 approximately 10:16, or -- yeah, 10:16. So we will begin  
24 what may be about the first hour of questioning. All right.  
25

## EXAMINATION

BY MS. JACKSON:

Q Could you give us your full name, please?

A [REDACTED]

Q Okay. And, Agent [REDACTED], when did you join the Diplomatic Security Service?

A It was early 2011.

Q And can you give us a summary of your professional background before joining the Diplomatic Security Service?

A Sure. I started out in the United States Navy. I joined [REDACTED], served 5 years as a combat search and rescue swimmer. I did two deployments to the [REDACTED] and also to [REDACTED]. Following the 5 years in the Navy, I went to school [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Following school, I started with the Diplomatic Security Service.

Q And have you opted for warmer environments [REDACTED] in your career with DS?

A Yeah, I have. I have. You know, my first post with DS was [REDACTED], which is beautiful. A little bit warmer [REDACTED]. But it's still, you know, still home.

Q So your first post was [REDACTED]. I'm assuming that is in 2011, some time after you finished basic

1 agent training?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Okay. And how long were you [REDACTED]?

4 A Approximately 3 years.

5 Q Okay. And where have you been assigned after

6 [REDACTED]?

7 A I'm now posted [REDACTED]

8 Q Okay. And when did you go [REDACTED]?

9 A September 1 of last year.

10 Q All right. And we understand that you had a  
11 temporary assignment in Benghazi, Libya, in 2012. How did  
12 you learn about that TDY?

13 A TDYs periodically are presented to us, and it's a  
14 choice of ours. If we're interested in one, we can show  
15 interest.

16 Q Okay. And obviously you showed interest in going  
17 to Benghazi, Libya. What was it about that assignment that  
18 interested you at the time?

19 A The adventure.

20 Q Okay. And any more details than that? Do you  
21 have, you know, because it was Africa, you know, sort of  
22 Middle East experience, Near East experience, or the nature  
23 of the post?

24 A I think it was the nature of the post. It was a  
25 chance for me to really get some leadership with the State

1 Department under my belt, a chance to serve in a challenging  
2 location, and really enhance my career.

3 Q Okay. And it was considered a high-threat post?

4 A It was.

5 Q Did you have to have any specialized training in  
6 order to take that assignment?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Okay. And what was that?

9 A It was high-threat training.

10 Q Okay. And when did you take the high-threat  
11 training?

12 A It was early 2012.

13 Q Okay. How long was that course?

14 A I can't remember the exact length of time, but it's  
15 approximately 5 weeks.

16 Q Okay. And what type of things were you taught in  
17 that high-threat tactical course?

18 A High-threat protection, additional drivers  
19 training, room-entry tactics. They introduced a couple more  
20 weapons to us, weapon systems, you know, some additional  
21 medical training. Several.

22 Q Can you do any compare and contrast to your  
23 military experience? Had you had similar-type training as  
24 part of the military or any reserve duty that you may have  
25 done?

1           A     Part of my military training consisted of -- you  
2     know, I was mainly focused on helicopters in the military,  
3     and rescue, but with that came, you know, SERE school. And  
4     the SERE school in the military was significantly different  
5     than the SERE school -- the 1-day SERE school that we  
6     received in high-threat training. But that's really the only  
7     main comparison I can give.

8           Q     Okay. And how long were you in SERE school in the  
9     military?

10          A     Looking back, I believe it is 3 weeks.

11          Q     All right. When you volunteered for the Libya  
12     assignment, was it for Tripoli or Benghazi or did you have a  
13     choice?

14          A     Originally, I had a choice. And, you know, this  
15     happened 2-1/2 years ago. My choice originally was to go to  
16     Benghazi, but I believe that there weren't any additional  
17     spaces, and so as my backup I chose Tripoli. You know,  
18     several weeks later a spot opened again in Benghazi and I  
19     took it.

20          Q     Okay. And how long was your original assignment to  
21     be?

22          A     In Benghazi?

23          Q     Yes.

24          A     Seventy days.

25          Q     Seventy days?



1 A Yes.

2 Q And approximately when -- do you remember when you  
3 went over?

4 A I arrived early August, the 1st, 2nd, or 3rd, I  
5 believe.

6 Q Okay. Did you know any other agents who had  
7 volunteered for a temporary assignment either in Tripoli or  
8 Benghazi either before you volunteered to go or before you  
9 went?

10 A Yes. [REDACTED], he was another special agent in  
11 [REDACTED].

12 Q Had he already gone and come back?

13 A Yes.

14 Q And was he in Tripoli or Benghazi?

15 A He was in Benghazi.

16 Q Okay. Did you talk with him about his experience?

17 A I did.

18 Q Okay. And what did you talk about?

19 A I talked about -- I just asked what it was like.

20 I've never been to Libya, you know, previously. What is the  
21 country like? What information should I, you know, read to  
22 prepare myself for this assignment? And so he just kind of  
23 guided me to different resources, you know, really prior to  
24 me taking the position fully.

25 Q Okay. Was he in Benghazi before or after you went

1 to the high-threat tactical course?

2 A Before.

3 Q Before. So he would have been there in late 2011,  
4 early 2012?

5 A I believe it was late -- I believe it was late  
6 2011.

7 Q Okay. Anyone else that you talked to either --  
8 let's focus on before you volunteered to go to Benghazi.

9 A Not that I can remember.

10 Q Okay. Did you talk to anybody else before you  
11 actually went to Benghazi?

12 A Yes.

13 Q And who was that?

14 A I spoke with [REDACTED] prior to going.

15 Q And how do you know Agent [REDACTED]?

16 A While I was going through high-threat training, he  
17 was in a different class. And we just kind of met up and  
18 became friends at high threat. We lived in the same hotel,  
19 essentially. And that started our friendship. Later, when I  
20 found out he was also interested in Benghazi, we began  
21 conversing regarding preparation.

22 Q Okay. Because did you know you were going to be  
23 over there at the same time?

24 A Initially we didn't know for sure because only one  
25 spot had opened and I put my name on it. Shortly after that,

1 another spot opened and he put his name on it. And so we  
2 began talking about that.

3 Q And as you were preparing to go over to Libya, you  
4 were reading materials, I believe, reading various things, I  
5 believe you said?

6 A Yes.

7 Q Okay. What type of things were you reading?

8 A Mainly open-source news articles. I think at some  
9 point I talked to [REDACTED] about, you know, an equipment  
10 list that he might have had, you know, from 2011. And we  
11 kind of -- I don't think he produced a document to me, but we  
12 kind of discussed, you know, some items to bring. And like I  
13 said before, it's a while ago, so I can't remember every  
14 communication regarding it, but I think that's about it.

15 Q Okay. Do you recall receiving anything from the  
16 State Department as to what to bring, sort of a checklist of  
17 to-do items before you went over there?

18 A Yes. Yes. I received an email from [REDACTED]  
19 with kind of a checklist and a post informational sheet. And  
20 I think that's -- I think that's it.

21 Q Okay. Was that like, you know, the weather in  
22 Libya is X, so you should bring clothes according to this?  
23 Bring your weapon, don't bring your weapon?

24 A No, I can't remember the exact contents of the  
25 documents. However, on the equipment sheet it would have

1 listed such things as, you know, please don't bring your  
2 weapon, please bring this item instead, or please avoid this.  
3 And I believe the informational sheet regarding Benghazi was  
4 kind of like you said, this is just in general what to expect  
5 in Libya, you know.

6 Q Okay. So you went over to Benghazi in early August  
7 of 2012. Did any other agent travel over there with you?

8 A No.

9 Q Okay. And did you travel straight into Benghazi or  
10 did you go through Tripoli?

11 A I traveled straight to Benghazi.

12 Q And who were the other agents there when you  
13 arrived?

14 A [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]

16 Q And did one or more of them depart while you were  
17 there?

18 A Yes.

19 Q Did all of them depart while you were there?

20 A Yes.

21 Q Okay. And who were they replaced with?

22 A They were replaced with [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED] and that's it, really.

24 Q Was there ever a time when you and Agent [REDACTED] were  
25 the only two assigned in Benghazi?

1 A No, I don't believe so.

2 Q So when [REDACTED] left he was replaced by  
3 [REDACTED]?

4 A Yes.

5 Q And [REDACTED] had come from Tripoli?

6 A He did.

7 Q Okay. Why don't you just describe for us  
8 everybody's sort of roles and responsibilities?

9 A Sure.

10 Q Yours and Agent [REDACTED] and Agent [REDACTED].

11 A Well, really because we operated with three people,  
12 with such a small team we worked on nearly every project  
13 together. My primary responsibility was the local guard  
14 force and also communicating with other security officials or  
15 maintaining communication with other security entities within  
16 the Benghazi area. You know, there were some other small  
17 programs which I can't recall what they were, but those were  
18 really the main two that I was responsible for.

19 Q Okay. And was Agent [REDACTED] in the role of the  
20 acting RSO or the supervisory special agent over there at the  
21 time?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Okay. And you said that your role was to work with  
24 the local guard force?

25 A Yes.

1           Q    Can you describe for us the local guard force that  
2 was over there or the host nation support that you had?

3           A    Sure. I worked with [REDACTED]. He was the  
4 primary contractor who ran the local guard force. But it was  
5 also my job to make sure that the local guard force was up to  
6 our expectations. And so I would work with [REDACTED]. If we  
7 came up with any issues or we wanted to change any  
8 procedures, if we had any, you know, issues we could  
9 negotiate a solution. But, I mean, really what we did was  
10 just make sure that everybody was standing post correctly.

11          Q    And was this the Blue Mountain Group?

12          A    It was.

13          Q    Okay. Was this the unarmed guards at the compound?

14          A    Yes.

15          Q    When you went in there, did -- I would assume, but  
16 correct me if I'm wrong -- that you did an assessment of  
17 their capabilities?

18          A    Yes.

19          Q    And what was your assessment of their capabilities?

20          A    My assessment of their capabilities, the local  
21 guard force, was that our expectations were being met. They  
22 weren't very highly skilled. They weren't armed. And so  
23 with that knowledge, you just have to work with what you  
24 have. And so we encouraged them to just follow our  
25 instructions as closely as possible.

1           Q     Okay. So screening vehicles as they approached the  
2     compound?

3           A     Yes.

4           Q     Finding out who, if someone came up on foot,  
5     finding out who they were, verifying that they had an  
6     appointment, that kind of thing?

7           A     Yes.

8           Q     Okay. Anything else, any other responsibilities  
9     that they had?

10          A     I mean, to warn us if, you know, something were to  
11     happen. They had pendants where they could, you know, warn  
12     the entire compound.

13          Q     Did they have to patrol the perimeter of the  
14     compound?

15          A     Internally they patrolled, you know, the perimeter.  
16     And, you know, there was a main -- there was the local guard  
17     force commander who basically made sure that everybody was  
18     following our standards. But, I mean, overall, you know,  
19     that's basically it.

20          Q     Now, you have said that overall, given what they  
21     were, they met your expectations. Were there any issues or  
22     problems that you encountered with the local guard force?

23          A     No. I think -- I think only minor -- minor  
24     problems would arise, which, you know, the local guard force  
25     commander would take care of. But to my recollection, there

1 weren't any major issues that we came across.

2 Q An occasional somebody not showing up or being late.  
3 or something like that, just routine issues?

4 A Yes. Yes.

5 Q Okay. And was there also something known as a QRF  
6 in Benghazi?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Okay. Did you have any role or responsibility with  
9 the QRF?

10 A It wasn't my primary duty, but like I said  
11 previously, we all worked together.

12 Q Sure. Okay. And who was the QRF in Benghazi?

13 A The QRF were three or four, approximately, you  
14 know, guards, or, you know, I don't know the correct term.  
15 But they were from 17th Feb Martyrs Brigade.

16 Q Okay. And how did their role and responsibility  
17 differ from the local guard force?

18 A Well, they were armed primarily. But really what  
19 we counted on them to do was to make a phone call to 17th  
20 February Martyrs Brigade so that we could receive backup in  
21 case something happened.

22 Q Okay. So you were aware that they had a larger  
23 contingent of people that was to be available to --

24 A Right. Right.

25 Q -- support the security of the compound.



1           A     Right.

2           Q     Okay. Would you describe for us the layout of the  
3     compound in Benghazi?

4           A     Sure. The compound was the size of approximately a  
5     city block. We had several buildings on the compound. You  
6     know, we had cement walls that went all the way around the  
7     compound. We had three main gates. We had a building for  
8     the QRF. We had, you know, basically this big villa where,  
9     you know, most of the meetings would take place. We also had  
10    the TOC, which is where my office was. We also had in the  
11    TOC was like a political officer's office. We had the  
12    cantina, which is where we kind of ate and a few people  
13    slept. We had a little gym area. And there was a road that  
14    ran, you know, through the compound. And originally it was  
15    two compounds, but they broke down the wall in the middle so  
16    we could drive a vehicle through, you know.

17          Q     And approximately how many people would be on the  
18    compound on any given day? What was the nucleus of the U.S.  
19    Government footprint, if you will?

20          A     U.S. Government only?

21          Q     Or locally employed staff?

22          A     You know, this is an approximation, 15.

23          Q     Okay. And can you categorize those people?

24          A     Sure.

25          Q     How many local guard force, QRF, DS agents?

1           A     Sure. I would say, you know, five, maybe six local  
2     guards, we had three or four QRF, three agents, usually an IT  
3     person, and the principal officer. We also had a gardener.  
4     I forgot, about three -- let's see, we had a couple of cooks.  
5     You know, I think that's about it.

6           Q     Okay. Did you have any, like, office manager or  
7     support staff?

8           A     At times people would come in to, you know, work  
9     on, you know, maybe our computers, or maybe they would come  
10    in and work on, you know, our meal contract. So we would  
11    have visitors periodically come in.

12          Q     Okay. Was there a woman by the name of [REDACTED]?

13          A     Yes.

14          Q     And what role did she play?

15          A     She was basically the -- I apologize, she was  
16    basically the office manager that ran, you know, schedules  
17    and such.

18          Q     Okay. Did clerical work, made appointments, things  
19    like that?

20          A     Yes.

21          Q     Was there an individual known as [REDACTED] or  
22    [REDACTED]?

23          A     He wasn't on the compound regularly, so I wouldn't  
24    count him as --

25          Q     Were you aware that he was employed by the State

1 Department?

2 A No.

3 Q And what role did he play when he was on the  
4 compound?

5 A I wasn't really privy to that information. I just  
6 saw him come and have meetings and leave.

7 Q Would he primarily interact with the principal  
8 officer?

9 A Yes.

10 Q All right. We talked a little bit earlier just  
11 about the physical layout of the compound. When you arrived  
12 there, did you receive any, like, security briefing or  
13 information from either [REDACTED] or the other agents  
14 as to the security layout of the compound? And were there  
15 any issues that were brought to your attention at the time?

16 A Yes. I can't remember exactly who gave me the  
17 information because, you know, we worked as a group, and so I  
18 can't recall exactly who said specifically what. However, I  
19 was given a brief of, here is our compound, here is kind of  
20 our, you know, the areas of concern, and, you know, here is  
21 what we are doing to, you know, mitigate this or work on  
22 this. So, yes, to answer your question, yes.

23 Q Was that, you know, sort of in a room at a table,  
24 just talking back and forth, or was it, like, a physical  
25 walk-around the compound pointing things out to you to get

1 folks more of an acclamation?

2 A It was a physical walk-around. We are extremely  
3 careful -- and we are extremely careful of our security, you  
4 know, vulnerabilities. And doing the physical walk-around is  
5 the only way you can truly understand the situation. So we  
6 walked around and discussed, I mean, every nook and cranny,  
7 every crack in the wall, every tree, and every piece of that  
8 compound to decide how can we make this better.

9 Q And what issues were brought to your attention when  
10 you first got to Benghazi? And along with the same lines, I  
11 understand, because I realize this is kind of a compound  
12 question, were there any additional issues that you yourself  
13 noticed?

14 A It would be really hard for me to differentiate  
15 between what we as a group decided or I was told were, you  
16 know, security vulnerabilities and what I decided. But we  
17 came to a consensus regarding the security concerns that we  
18 had.

19 Q And what was that consensus?

20 A The consensus was that we needed some serious  
21 security upgrades for, I mean, several parts of the compound.

22 Q Can you describe those for us, please?

23 A Sure. You know, we came up with a list of these  
24 recommendations. I can't remember, you know, every single  
25 one, but basically, as we walk around we noticed that there

1 was a chain-link fence that wasn't complete that had great  
2 intentions, but it wasn't complete. The TOC door was not up  
3 to our standards. The cameras needed, you know, the cameras  
4 needed to be cleaned. They also needed to be replaced or  
5 upgraded. You know, we -- the weapon systems, we talked  
6 about the weapon systems.

7 Q Do you recall if you wrote those recommendations  
8 down, those observations and recommendations down, you or the  
9 other agents?

10 A I mean, I'm sure there is a document with those in  
11 them.

12 Q Okay. I'm going to hand you what I have marked as  
13 Exhibit 1 for purposes of this interview.

14 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 1

15 was marked for identification.]

16 BY MS. JACKSON:

17 Q And for the record, I have handed you a four-page  
18 document bearing document number C05578292. And it says at  
19 the top, "security Requests for U.S. Mission Benghazi." And  
20 it bears the date August 22, 2012. Take a minute or 2, or as  
21 long as you need to review that document?

22 A Okay.

23 Q Okay?

24 A Yes.

25 Q All right. Do you recognize this document, Agent

1 [REDACTED]?

2 A I do.

3 Q Okay. And did you help create this document?

4 A Yes.

5 Q Okay. Is this the list of security requests that

6 you and Agent [REDACTED] and Agent [REDACTED] put together?

7 A It is.

8 Q And did you communicate these security requests to  
9 anyone?

10 A No.

11 Q It was just internal to the three of you?

12 A I personally did not communicate this to anybody  
13 besides us three, yes.

14 Q Okay. Are you aware whether anyone else sent it to  
15 Tripoli, or did [REDACTED] or others within the State  
16 Department?

17 A It's my impression that it was sent, but I don't  
18 know for certain.

19 Q Okay. I want to ask, and does this document  
20 accurately summarize what you and the other agents felt were  
21 needed for the security in Benghazi?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Would you consider it the ultimate security or the  
24 bare minimum that was needed or something in between?

25 A I think that this was a list that we compiled to

1 make the compound more safe, but I can't really speak to if  
2 this is the bare minimum or the maximum. I will always take  
3 more as far as security goes. And so this being the  
4 best-case scenario, it is not likely.

5 Q Okay. I wanted to ask you about a couple of items  
6 on here. On page 2, bullet point number 2, it talks about an  
7 IDNS pendant system. Can you tell me what that is?

8 A Sure. I don't remember what IDNS stands for.  
9 However, the pendant system is basically -- it gives us the  
10 ability to alert the entire compound if something is about to  
11 happen, something bad. So basically the user pushes the  
12 button on their pendant and it alerts the rest of the people  
13 on the compound to prepare for something.

14 Q So it's a trigger for an alarm system?

15 A It is.

16 Q Okay. And what were the issues that you were  
17 encountering with that trigger for the alarm system?

18 A I can't remember the exact issues that were coming  
19 up, but we were having issues. And I recall something about,  
20 you know, I mean, as it says here, the information that comes  
21 from the document leads me to believe that the pendants were  
22 not able to communicate properly to the system.

23 Q Okay. And it says, "Currently only two guards have  
24 an IDNS pendant." That would lead me to assume -- but I'm  
25 asking you -- did that mean that only two were operational at

1 the time?

2 A Like I said, I can't recall the exact numbers or  
3 the exact issues we were having. I apologize. It was a long  
4 time ago. But I don't know.

5 Q Okay. And then if on the same page, if we could go  
6 down to the fourth bullet point that says, "Better [REDACTED]  
7 software." Can you tell me what that refers to?

8 A Sure. [REDACTED] stands for [REDACTED]. And we  
9 were periodically having issues with logging into the system  
10 and system updates of locations when we were traveling  
11 throughout the city.

12 Q Okay. And can you just describe for us what the  
13 [REDACTED] does for you?

14 A Sure. It's this [REDACTED] that you take  
15 with you when you go out in town or you can keep it in your  
16 bedroom or whatever you want to do. But basically, [REDACTED]

17 [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED] it will send a signal that shows your location. [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Yeah.

21 Q So it is like a [REDACTED]

22 A It is.

23 Q Okay. And does it then -- the software then notes  
24 the person's physical location on a map of some sort?

25 A Yes.



1 Q Okay. And you had [REDACTED] in Benghazi?

2 A We did.

3 Q Okay. Do you recall how many you had?

4 A No.

5 Q Do you know who carried them?

6 A I mean, I believe we all had them. But I cannot be  
7 certain. I remember them being around. I remember taking  
8 them in the vehicles with us wherever we went. I don't  
9 remember if everybody in the vehicle had one. But, yes, we  
10 used them regularly.

11 Q And whoever stayed back and manned the TOC would  
12 have then been able to track your movements as people moved  
13 around the city of Benghazi?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Okay. Two bullet points below that it says,  
16 "Belt-fed crew-served weapon [REDACTED] with bi-pod."  
17 Not being familiar with weapons, could you tell me what that  
18 is, what you and the other agents are asking for?

19 A Sure. Basically, this is a belt-fed machine gun,  
20 which means it has a belt of rounds or a box that's attached  
21 to the bottom side of it. And it shoots very fast and it's  
22 meant to, you know, shoot very fast.

23 Q All right. And why was it that you and the other  
24 agents felt you needed this?

25 A You know, I felt that the weapon systems that we

1       currently had were -- I wasn't comfortable with our current  
2       weapon systems.

3           Q     You felt they needed to be enhanced in some way?

4           A     Yes, yes, I do.

5           Q     And what weapons did you have available to you?

6           A     We had 9-millimeter pistols, 12-gauge shotguns, and  
7       M4s.

8           Q     Did your QRF have any greater either number or type  
9       of enhanced weaponry?

10          A     You know, they had some kind of -- I mean, they had  
11       AK-47s, and they also had some kind of -- I don't remember  
12       exactly what type of weapon it was. But it was, you know,  
13       some kind of assault rifle.

14          Q     Do you know if they were semiautomatic or fully  
15       automatic?

16          A     Fully.

17          Q     Fully? Okay. And what was it about the security  
18       situation in Benghazi that caused you and the other agents to  
19       feel that you needed a belt-fed machine gun?

20          A     Well, from my prior experiences in the military and  
21       also from being trained as a special agent, I'm a  
22       professional in security. And with the situation that we  
23       were given in Benghazi, this is a list of enhancements that  
24       we could have provided better security to ourselves and to  
25       the other people who were on the compound. Sorry, can you

1 ask the question again?

2 Q Sure. Let me ask this question. If you had been  
3 given a belt-fed machine gun, would you have posted it  
4 someplace? Was that the plan when you requested -- when you  
5 made the request?

6 A I'm sure we came up with several scenarios. I  
7 can't remember exactly what they were. But one of them was  
8 probably posting machine guns somewhere.

9 Q And was that for some sort of deterrent effect?

10 A I mean, all weapons are used for a deterrence. So  
11 I would assume so, yes.

12 Q Okay. Would just the visibility of a machine gun  
13 provide a deterrent benefit, in your opinion?

14 A Being that we are a diplomatic mission, you know,  
15 we don't use weapons as openly as maybe other people, so we  
16 probably wouldn't put it out in the open for everybody to  
17 know or see.

18 Q Okay. And then at the bottom of this page there is  
19 a section called "Manpower requests." Do you recall  
20 assisting and putting this list together?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Okay. And it's requesting additional both local  
23 guards and -- actually, I think three total local guards, is  
24 that correct? Am I reading this --

25 A From what this says, I believe so, yes.

1 Q Okay. And why did you and the other agents feel  
2 that additional local guard force was necessary?

3 A More is always better. More eyes on the situation  
4 are always better.

5 Q It was a large compound?

6 A It was.

7 Q And were parts of it -- did you have a good optics  
8 from the camera surveillance system on all parts of the  
9 compound?

10 A No.

11 Q Okay. And what was the drawbacks of the camera  
12 system that was there?

13 A The resolution was pretty bad. They were easily  
14 filling with dust and so had to be cleaned quite often. And  
15 they were getting old.

16 Q Okay. In bullet 3, under "Manpower requests," it  
17 says, quote, "The use of a brigade QRF is not desirable for  
18 many reasons. Request a minimum of four local bodyguards  
19 trained by DS to use on movements as well as QRF duties," end  
20 quote.

21 Can you tell us the reasons why the Feb 17th QRF was not  
22 desirable?

23 A The QRF that we had were not very skilled. Being  
24 prior military and also a special agent, I'm trained -- I  
25 have trained for several years on weapon systems and how to

1 care for them, how to be safe with them, how to operate them  
2 properly, and our QRF didn't receive the same training that I  
3 had. So I have very high standards when it comes to how to  
4 properly use a weapon, care for a weapon, and my standards  
5 were not met.

6 Q Okay. And were your standards similar to the  
7 standards of the other agents who were there?

8 A Yes. [REDACTED] and I worked with the QRF hoping  
9 that we could enhance their capabilities or enhance the  
10 safety. And so we had discussed several times of what we  
11 thought the level of professionalism needed to be.

12 Q Okay. And they did not meet that?

13 A No.

14 Q Okay. And Agent [REDACTED] also had prior military  
15 experience too?

16 A He did.

17 Q So you did training with the QRF?

18 A I don't know if I can constitute it as necessarily  
19 training, but we did work with them to, you know, ensure they  
20 were more safe.

21 Q Okay. And then the last bullet point under  
22 "Manpower requests" is, quote, "Request a minimum of four DS  
23 agents at post," end quote. What can you tell us about that  
24 request?

25 A Benghazi was dangerous and we needed more agents on

1 the ground, in our eyes. And so this is what this says.

2 Q Okay. So three was not sufficient?

3 A In my opinion, no.

4 Q. Okay. Were you aware that there had been a  
5 recommendation that there be five agents in Benghazi?

6 A It's possible. If there is a document, you know, I  
7 wouldn't disagree with it. But I don't have any knowledge on  
8 this.

9 Q You don't recall any conversations with anyone else  
10 saying, "Hey, we're supposed to have five, we only have  
11 three," any conversation along those lines?

12 A We had a lot of conversations on this specifically,  
13 and I can't be certain that, you know, what numbers we came  
14 up with, or what was actually discussed. It was quite a  
15 while ago.

16 Q All right. Apart from the belt-fed machine gun,  
17 were you and the other agents satisfied as to the just  
18 overall number of firearms and ammunition that you had  
19 available to you?

20 A No.

21 Q Okay. And what was deficient in your opinion and  
22 in the opinion of the other agents?

23 A The deficiencies we had were, in my opinion, we  
24 didn't know when the weapons were last sighted in. Sighted  
25 in?

1 Q What does that mean?

2 A Basically, to properly zero or sighted a weapon you  
3 need to take several shots at a target to make sure that your  
4 sights are aligned properly so that you can hit, you know,  
5 hit your target.

6 Q Okay.

7 A Our ammo supply was fairly low. The M4s were, you  
8 know, they didn't have any additional sights on them other  
9 than the iron sights, which are just -- they come standards  
10 on the M4. And there is enhancements you can make to help  
11 with that.

12 You know, there might be a couple of others. I just  
13 can't remember them right now.

14 Q Okay. Now, I believe you said or maybe -- but  
15 anyway, you did not take weapons with you when you travel  
16 into Benghazi? Is that correct?

17 A No. Oh, you mean when I personally flew into --

18 Q Yes. Yes.

19 A Yes. I did not take any weapons with me into  
20 Benghazi.

21 Q Okay. You received weapons once you arrived in  
22 Benghazi.

23 A Yes.

24 Q Okay. And that was the same for the other agents  
25 too?

1           A    I don't know. I mean --

2           Q    Did any agents arrive after you?

3           A    No, no agents arrived after me with weapons.

4           Q    Okay. When Agents [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] came in on the  
5 10th, do you recall if they were issued weapons?

6           A    My mind is kind of foggy, but I believe so, yes.

7           Q    Okay. But they came from in country?

8           A    They did.

9           Q    Okay. Is there anything else about the physical  
10 security layout of the compound or the staffing, the security  
11 staffing of the compound that you thought was problematic?

12          A    I mean, this is a long list of recommendations.  
13 And, you know, looking at the list, nothing stands out that I  
14 can recall that isn't on this list. But, you know, possibly.

15          Q    Okay. Were any security upgrades made while you  
16 were there?

17          A    Yes.

18          Q    Okay. Can you describe those for us, please?

19          A    Sure. Originally in the TOC we had a thin wooden  
20 door that separated the TOC from the rest of the building.  
21 And we needed to upgrade that and so we did. We basically  
22 found a local contractor who made a door for us, installed  
23 the door, and it provided a little more protection.

24          Q    Okay. Were there any other upgrades?

25          A    Sandbags. We had sandbags placed in kind of key



1 areas for us.

2 Let me see here. We had a guy come and work on the  
3 generators to make sure, you know, in case of an emergency  
4 that the generators could, you know, kick on.

5 I can't recall any other off the top of my head.

6 Q Okay. Going back to the local guard force and the  
7 QRF, were you or the other agents ever concerned about their  
8 loyalty to their job or mission?

9 A Yes.

10 Q Okay. Can you describe that for us, please?

11 A Sure.

12 Ms. Safai. Can you be a little more specific? Describe  
13 what?

14 Ms. Jackson. Well, I think that the agent was going to  
15 answer the question, so --

16 Mr. [REDACTED] I mean, for me, it is a really general --  
17 I mean, we talked about the training. Are you talking about  
18 training, or are you talking -- what specifically?

19 BY MS. JACKSON:

20 Q Did you or the agents ever have any concerns as to  
21 whether any of the local guard force or the QRF were  
22 providing information to criminal or insurgent elements? Did  
23 you ever ask that they be vetted or investigated by the local  
24 police department [REDACTED]? From that perspective?

25 A Yes.

1 Q Okay. And would you describe that for us, please?

2 A Sure. I'm sorry, I'm just trying to get my  
3 thoughts here.

4 So there came a point when the QRF said that they could  
5 no longer ride in the vehicles with us, and they also were a  
6 little more standoffish from us. They asked a few questions  
7 regarding, you know, other Americans in the area. And this  
8 to me was peculiar. And so I brought it up to, you know,  
9 other people on compound, and we decided to, you know, bring  
10 that information [REDACTED].

11 Q And did you make a request [REDACTED] to  
12 check them out in any way?

13 A I think we had a -- I think that -- I can't be  
14 certain on exactly what transpired, but I remember talking  
15 [REDACTED] regarding this. And I just don't have  
16 the information that goes beyond that discussion.

17 Q Did you provide [REDACTED] with their names or  
18 any other identifiers?

19 A I don't know if I did or if somebody else did. You  
20 know, I apologize. I can't recall, you know, exactly how it  
21 went down but --

22 Q Was it all of the QRF, or was it one of the QRF, or  
23 one or more?

24 A No, it was all of the QRF.

25 Q So the three to four QRF people that you had on,

1       you had concerns about their loyalty to their jobs, for lack  
2       of a better description?

3           A     Yes. Yes.

4           Q     Do you know if that concern was shared by the other  
5       agents?

6           A     I know that we had a meeting about it. I don't  
7       remember what we talked about specifically, but this topic  
8       was a part of the meeting. And because we brought it up to  
9       ██████████, you know, there must have been some kind of,  
10      you know, understanding amongst our team.

11          Q     Okay. And do you recall approximately when this  
12      occurred?

13          A     No.

14          Q     Would it have been in conjunction with the time  
15      that they refused to do off-compound moves?

16          A     I mean, those two instances are -- they are close,  
17      you know, I don't know if they are in conjunction,  
18      necessarily, but, I mean, they are close in proximity, as far  
19      as I remember.

20          Q     Okay. And what else do you remember about the  
21      refusal to make off-compound moves by the QRF? Let me ask  
22      this first.

23          A     Sure. Sure.

24          Q     I'm assuming that when you first got there, they  
25      were making off-compound moves with you?

1 A They were.

2 Q Okay. And what was their role in off-compound  
3 moves?

4 A Well, Benghazi was -- throughout Benghazi several  
5 checkpoints had been established and they were manned  
6 sometimes and not manned other times. And the times that  
7 there were individuals at these checkpoints, having the QRF  
8 in the vehicle with us was very beneficial. Usually we could  
9 just, you know, they would wave, or they would show a card  
10 and we could drive through the checkpoints.

11 Q Okay. Let me ask this. How did you get notified  
12 that they weren't going to make off-compound moves?

13 A You know, I don't remember exactly how I was  
14 notified.

15 Q Okay. Did they have a supervisor that you or  
16 others coordinated with? I know you didn't, you worked with  
17 the local guard force, not the QRF, but --

18 A Right.

19 Q Was there a supervisor of them or --

20 A Yes. Yes.

21 Q All right. And did you or others have any meetings  
22 with that person or any other person to try and resolve this?

23 A We did. We did.

24 Q What can you tell us about that?

25 A Well, the meeting was basically just to hash out

1 any issues that they brought to the table or concerns that  
2 we, you know, that we had. You know, I can't remember  
3 exactly what their concerns were. You know, one of our  
4 concerns was having them in the vehicles with us. But, you  
5 know, really the meeting was, you know, like you said, I  
6 wasn't privy to all of the information because I was in  
7 charge of local guard force.

8 Q Do you recall if the issue ever got resolved?

9 A I don't know if it was ever resolved, but I  
10 remember them riding in the vehicles periodically with us  
11 even after they said, we could no longer ride in the  
12 vehicles.

13 Q Were they just being a little insubordinate to  
14 their superiors, or do you recall?

15 A I don't know if their superiors really said, you  
16 know, you can no longer ride with the agents. They could  
17 have made it up, for all I know. But, you know, after they  
18 came down and said, we can't ride with you, they continued  
19 periodically.

20 Q Okay. Agent [REDACTED], when we were talking about  
21 the QRF were doing some things that caused you and the others  
22 some concerns, one of the things that you mentioned was that  
23 one or more of them was making inquiries about other  
24 Americans. Can you elaborate on that for us?

25 A Sure. Sure. You know, they were asking who the

1 other Americans were that were at the airport. That's really  
2 what the question was.

3 Q Okay. And why was that concerning to you and the  
4 others?

5 A Well, I mean, because a lot of times the other  
6 Americans at the airport [REDACTED], [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED]

8 Q Sure. So these were -- I just want to make sure I  
9 understand. So when they were asking about other Americans  
10 that were there, were these instances where you and the  
11 agents were going to the airport to pick someone up and you  
12 were augmented in some way [REDACTED] or was it  
13 unrelated to your and [REDACTED] activities?

14 A It was probably, you know, several different  
15 instances put together, not specifically one incident. You  
16 know, [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED], you know, we would see them at the airport  
18 periodically. And I think just in general that was, you  
19 know, their concern.

20 Q And the QRF would be there with you when you would  
21 go to the airport?

22 A Yes.

23 Q Okay. And it would be under those circumstances  
24 they would say, who is that? Or would it --

25 Ms. Safai. Do you remember?

1           Mr. [REDACTED] Yeah, I can't remember exactly under what  
2 circumstances.

3           Ms. Jackson. Okay.

4           I see that we are approaching the end of the first hour,  
5 and so I think this might be a good opportunity to take a  
6 break. We will go get some more water, because I'm almost  
7 out of mine. And resume in about maybe 10 minutes or so.  
8 Okay?

9           Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

10          Ms. Jackson. So we're off the record.

11          [Recess.]  
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EXAMINATION

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q It is just about 11:30. Again, Mr. [REDACTED], my name is Heather Sawyer. I'm here with one of my colleagues, Peter Kenny, and we work with the Democratic members of the committee, and again, we thank you for being with us today. Ranking Member Cummings is hoping to come by and be with us for at least part of the day. He had a meeting in Baltimore but he is hoping to get here soon, so that will be a nice addition.

We know that you've already spoken with the Accountability Review Board that convened to investigate the attacks, and I presume you have also spoken with the FBI and the Department of Justice to ensure a full investigation of the attacks and help with law enforcement efforts.

Have you had an opportunity to read the, at least unclassified version of the Accountability Review Board report?

A Small portions.

Q Well, I hope at least those small portions included the portions that spoke to the work that you and your team did on the night of the attacks. Certainly the Accountability Review Board investigation was pretty thorough, and pretty hard hitting on a number of fronts,



1 including some of the fronts we have talked about already and  
2 will continue talking about, but the one thing they were very  
3 clear about was the performance of the team on the ground,  
4 and we thank you for that.

5 So with that in mind, I want to, in our hour of  
6 questioning, follow-up on some of the topics that we have  
7 talked about in the last hour and then just continue with  
8 some of the issues that the committee is grappling with as we  
9 investigate the attacks.

10 You explained a little bit about the team that was  
11 present in Benghazi when you arrived there or during your  
12 time there. Who would have been the acting RSO?

13 A [REDACTED].

14 Q And would you have reported to Mr. [REDACTED]?

15 A Yes.

16 Q And then who would Mr. [REDACTED] report to?

17 A The RSO in Tripoli.

18 Q And who was the RSO in Tripoli during the time you  
19 were there?

20 A I don't remember if -- at one point it was [REDACTED]

21 [REDACTED]. I don't know what the length of his time was,  
22 though.

23 Q Well, Mr. [REDACTED], I think, was there when you  
24 were there in August.

25 A Yes.

1 Q And he was then replaced by Mr. [REDACTED]?

2 A Yes.

3 Q And as the RSOs for Benghazi, would they have been  
4 the two individuals primarily responsible for communicating  
5 with Tripoli on behalf of your team?

6 A Yes.

7 Q And you had indicated that you, yourself, did not  
8 communicate directly with Tripoli?

9 A There might have been one or two emails but, no.  
10 On a regular basis, no.

11 Q Had you felt the need to communicate directly with  
12 Tripoli, do you think that you would have felt able to do  
13 that?

14 A There was never a need to, so I don't really think  
15 I've ever thought about it.

16 Q And when you say there was never a need to, is that  
17 because you felt like your team came to resolutions and  
18 passed to Mr. [REDACTED] the various recommendations you may  
19 have had?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And we talked about some of those recommendations,  
22 and you were shown Exhibit 1 for the record, and I want to  
23 show you what we are going to mark as Exhibit 2 for purposes  
24 of identification here.

25 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

1                                    was marked for identification.]

2                    BY MS. SAWYER:

3                    Q     That document, Exhibit 2, bears a document number  
4                    C05474918. It is just a one-page document. And down at the  
5                    bottom of that document, Mr. [REDACTED], there is an email from  
6                    Mr. [REDACTED] who, as we just discussed, was the RSO in  
7                    Benghazi at the time, to [REDACTED], and you're cc'd on  
8                    that email. And that he talks about there, the subject line  
9                    is "RSO Turnover Docs," and then in the body of the email  
10                   you'll see that third sentence says "refers to the security  
11                   request document, details some security projects we are  
12                   working on/would like to work on."

13                   So just briefly, and to the best of your recollection  
14                   because this particular document didn't have those turnover  
15                   documents attached, did you remember, what would be the  
16                   purpose of those turnover documents?

17                   A     To assist in somebody coming in just understanding  
18                   the situation on the ground.

19                   Q     And so that was to assist at the time, Mr.  
20                   [REDACTED], in understanding what was going on in Benghazi so  
21                   that he could transition into the position that Mr. [REDACTED]  
22                   had held?

23                   A     I would assume so.

24                   Q     Do you have any recollection as to whether that  
25                   security request document was the security requests that you

1 had been working on with your team that we talked about as  
2 Exhibit 1?

3 A I mean, I can't be certain. The file name could  
4 have been slightly different. I can't recall.

5 Q Do you recall working on any other list of security  
6 requests during that time?

7 A There were several versions to come to this  
8 document, so I do recall working on those. I'm not even sure  
9 if this is the final document we came up with.

10 Q And then up at the top, you'll see this one you are  
11 not included on, but it is an email from [REDACTED] to  
12 [REDACTED]. Mr. [REDACTED], at the time, was in Tripoli on  
13 August 29, do you recall, or did he move to Benghazi?

14 A I can't recall the exact dates he was in Benghazi.

15 Q He sends it to [REDACTED], who you said was the  
16 RSO in Tripoli, who was also, you said, the DS team in  
17 Benghazi would have reported to?

18 A I wasn't part of that team, but I believe so, yes.

19 Q Okay. And then in that email, Mr. [REDACTED]  
20 indicates "FYI: For your approval," presumably to Mr.  
21 [REDACTED]. And then he says, "Should the security request  
22 section be passed to the relevant offices/personnel here and  
23 in D.C.? These seem like reasonable requests." So Mr.  
24 [REDACTED], by this document at least, had discussed the  
25 request with Mr. [REDACTED]. Do you know what the status then

1 was of those requests?

2 A No.

3 Q And Mr. [REDACTED], at least, indicates that he  
4 believes these are reasonable requests. Did you hear anyone  
5 ever say that they were not reasonable requests?

6 A No. I don't remember.

7 Q And do you know what the status of those requests  
8 were, and we can talk about some of the specific ones, so one  
9 of the things that we discussed in the last hour was the  
10 request regarding the cameras on site, on the compound, and  
11 that there had been some difficulties with the cameras. Do  
12 you know what the status was of the request to address the  
13 problems with the cameras?

14 A No.

15 Q Do you know if there had been a technician  
16 scheduled to come in mid-September?

17 A I remember that we attempted, or it wasn't me  
18 personally, but I remember the conversation not in specifics,  
19 that we discussed having a technician come out to Benghazi.  
20 That is it.

21 Q Okay. In that, just looking at Exhibit 1 again,  
22 and just directing your attention to Page 2, the manpower  
23 requests?

24 A Okay.

25 Q And you talked a little bit in the last hour about

1 the request to use a minimum of four local bodyguards trained  
2 by DS instead of the Brigade QRF, so, in essence, the request  
3 there was for DS to be able to handle the security through  
4 direct hire?

5 A I don't know if it was through direct hire, but the  
6 first part that you mentioned is true.

7 Q So there would be a way that, whether direct hire  
8 or otherwise, they were kind of directly reportable to the DS  
9 agents?

10 A Yes.

11 Q And not really necessarily, even if they were  
12 members February 17th, coming to you through February 17th?  
13 Let's strike that.

14 So that they would not, even if they were members of  
15 February 17th, they would still just be directly reporting to  
16 DS and trained directly by DS?

17 A I don't know.

18 Q Is that how that would work?

19 A Yeah, I don't know.

20 Q And do you know whether there had been any response  
21 to the notion of having direct hires by DS?

22 A No.

23 Q So in terms of not knowing exactly when some of  
24 these requests, certainly the camera requests that we spoke  
25 about had been scheduled, was it your sense that at least

1 some of them were being worked on?

2 A Yes.

3 Q So one of the other things that we talked a little  
4 bit about in the last hour was concerns that had come up  
5 around the QRF, and you had indicated that some of those  
6 concerns were triggered by the internal QRF reluctance to, I  
7 think as you put it, kind of drive with you guys in Benghazi.  
8 Was that referring to their, at some point, decision not to  
9 support off-compound moves?

10 A Can you rephrase your question, please?

11 Q Sure. Let me actually just show you an exhibit  
12 because I think it will be easier than me, because some of  
13 these phrases are also unfamiliar to me, not being part of  
14 DS. Let me just show you what we are going to mark as  
15 Exhibit 3. This is a long exhibit, so I'm going to just  
16 direct you to a couple things in it, but I want you to take  
17 as much time as you want to take a look at it.

18 Ms. Jackson. Is it September 10 at the top?

19 Ms. Sawyer. Yes. Why don't we go off the record.

20 [Discussion off the record.]

21 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 3

22 was marked for identification.]

23 BY MS. SAWYER:

24 Q So on Exhibit 2, I just wanted to direct your  
25 attention initially, Mr. [REDACTED], to, in my version -- I'm

1       sorry, Exhibit 3 -- in my version, the conversation, the  
2       email conversation that begins at the bottom of -- and this  
3       document, just for identification purposes, is marked  
4       document C05396013. It is a six-page document. It is an  
5       email thread that begins on September 7, and at least in this  
6       thread, ends on September 10. But I wanted to just direct  
7       your attention initially to the email conversation that  
8       begins just with the header at the bottom of Page 3, Mr.  
9       ██████████ and then continues on page 4. That is an email  
10      from Mr. ██████████. It is on September 8, so at that point  
11      in time Mr. ██████████ was the RSO in Benghazi?

12      A     Yes.

13      Q     And he was supervising the DS's team?

14      A     He was.

15      Q     And you are cc'd along with Mr. ██████████, who is  
16      the RSO in Tripoli and ██████████, and you'd mentioned his  
17      name before. Who was Mr. ██████████?

18      A     I don't remember his exact position, but it was, I  
19      believe, he was an IP desk officer. I can't be certain.

20      Q     And then Mr. ██████████, do you know who he is?

21      A     No.

22      Q     Now, that conversation that then starts at the top  
23      of page 4, that the first sentence there says: "We were just  
24      notified by our 17th February Brigade QRF this evening that  
25      they were told by their leadership to no longer support



1 off-compound moves and only provide internal defense." Now  
2 this particular email is dated Saturday, September 8, 2012.  
3 In the last hour, I just want to talk about timing for a  
4 moment before the substance. When we were talking in the  
5 last hour when you were talking about colleagues, you said  
6 that there had been some concerns raised about the QRF, that  
7 you had some suspicions; I think they were your suspicions,  
8 and that you believed it had -- in terms of timing, you were  
9 having a hard time remembering the exact timing. It had to  
10 do with some concerns about their -- that your suspicions had  
11 been triggered, in part, by their refusal to drive with you  
12 guys off compound in Benghazi. Does this help with regard to  
13 the timing at all?

14 A Unfortunately, no. I can't be certain if my  
15 suspicions were directly related to them not driving in the  
16 car with us.

17 Q Do you believe that you had had the conversation  
18 [REDACTED] about your concerns with  
19 QRF before September 8?

20 A I don't know.

21 Q Could it have been after, which would have meant it  
22 would have had to have been September 8, 9, 10 or 11. Could  
23 it have been in that time frame?

24 A I don't know.

25 Q And do you recall [REDACTED] you raised those

1 concerns with? [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]

3 A I can't recall who we brought the information to  
4 directly, no.

5 Q Did they ever get back to you about your concerns?

6 A I can't recall. Sorry. I'm trying to rack my  
7 brain, and I just can't recall.

8 Q Do you recall -- beyond raising concerns with  
9 [REDACTED], did you raise those concerns with  
10 anyone in Tripoli?

11 A Me personally? Probably not.

12 Q Do you know if anyone on the Benghazi team raised  
13 those concerns with anyone in Tripoli?

14 A No, I don't know.

15 Q Did you, yourself, or to the best of your  
16 knowledge, anyone on your Benghazi team, raise those concerns  
17 with anyone in Washington, D.C.?

18 A I don't know.

19 Q So, to the best of your knowledge, the only people  
20 that you or anyone in the Benghazi DS team raised concerns  
21 were with [REDACTED]?

22 A I can't really speak to what others did, but as far  
23 as me, like I stated previously, I don't remember what my  
24 communication was directly. That is it.

25 Q Okay. And I know that you, your memory is not

1 clear on this, but did [REDACTED] ever tell you  
2 during your entire time in Benghazi, that they had concerns  
3 about any of the particular members of the February 17th  
4 Brigade who were first working on your internal compound  
5 defense?

6 A I don't remember.

7 Q Now, just returning to Exhibit 3, the indication  
8 there is that you had just, Mr. [REDACTED] says we were just  
9 noted by 17th February Brigade this evening that they were no  
10 longer going to support off-compound moves. You indicated in  
11 the last hour that you had been in a meeting with the  
12 February 17th where this topic, and potentially other topics,  
13 were discussed. So in this same email chain, I just want to  
14 direct you now to the first page of the document.

15 A Okay.

16 Q Down at the bottom, you'll see Mr. [REDACTED] again  
17 communicating with Mr. [REDACTED], and you were cc'd on the cc  
18 line, and the first sentence there it says "Acting PO, acting  
19 RSO, and TDY A/RSO met with two February Brigade outreach  
20 personnel and the QRF commander today about a change of  
21 policy the previous day." To the best of your recollection,  
22 is that the meeting that you attended to discuss with  
23 February 17th the off-compound and other issues?

24 A To the best of my recollection, yes.

25 Q And when it says "acting PO," does that mean the

1 acting principal officer?

2 A Yes, it does.

3 Q And at the time, and I think you're cc'd there, and  
4 so we're talking about September 9. That would have been  
5 Mr. [REDACTED]?

6 A I believe so, yes.

7 Q And I don't think we mentioned in the last hour,  
8 but he replaced someone who had been the former principal  
9 officer in August, and that had been Mr. [REDACTED]?

10 A That is correct.

11 Q So that email talks in a fair amount of detail  
12 about the meeting, talks about the off-compound moves, the  
13 refusal to do it. So I'm just going to direct you on page 2  
14 to the fourth paragraph down, and not have you read the whole  
15 thing, and there it says during the meeting with Brigade  
16 personnel, they indicated they would continue to support  
17 internal defense of the mission with the on-compound QRF and  
18 nearby off-compound response personnel at the current rate.

19 So, was it your understanding that though there was a  
20 dispute over off-compound moves, they had still agreed to  
21 provide internal defense? Is that consistent with how you  
22 understood what the problem was with regard to the  
23 off-compound moves, but that the internal defense would  
24 remain the same, at least for the time being?

25 A Yes.

1           Q     Then the next paragraph down, Mr. [REDACTED] says,  
2     "The meeting ended on good terms. We agreed to continue to  
3     work toward a signed agreement and meet again in the short  
4     term." Does that, to the best of your recollection, reflect  
5     the feeling of the Benghazi team walking out of that meeting  
6     that it had ended on good terms?

7           A     Yes.

8           Q     And that you were going to continue trying to work  
9     through with the February 17th Brigade and reach some  
10    agreement?

11          A     Yes.

12          Q     And then he, down below, indicates some options.  
13    We don't have to go through all of them, and he specifically  
14    says in no particular order, so assuming there is no priority  
15    to these, that one would be to -- the second bullet down says  
16    "Work to replace 17th Feb QRF with direct hire." Then the  
17    first one is to reach a signed MOA, which I think just stands  
18    for memorandum of agreement, and continue in the fashion that  
19    had been ongoing so far, it seems like from those options.

20          So I know that, from the best of your recollection, if  
21    the recommendation coming from Mr. [REDACTED] was potentially  
22    to continue with the February 17th Brigade on September 9, in  
23    essence, 2 days before -- 1 day before the Ambassador was  
24    scheduled to arrive -- to the best of your recollection, had  
25    the issues around suspicions, particularized potential

1       suspicions, been resolved by this point?

2           A     I'm not the professionals on that side. I just  
3       reported my suspicions, so there is no way for me to know.

4           Q     And when you say you reported your suspicions,  
5       you're referring to your conversation [REDACTED]

6       [REDACTED]?

7           A     Yes.

8           Q     Now, there is nothing in this email that reflects  
9       any concerns about the current personnel working on the  
10      internal defense. Is that accurate? So there is certainly  
11      nothing in this conversation that reflects that particular  
12      concern?

13          A     Not that I noticed.

14          Q     So before I leave this exhibit, Exhibit 3, I just  
15      wanted to direct your attention to the third page. Down at  
16      the bottom there is an email from Mr. [REDACTED] back to  
17      Mr. [REDACTED] -- again, you're cc'd on that -- where he,  
18      responding to Mr. [REDACTED] alerting them that there was a  
19      problem, that there wasn't a planned meeting; he indicates,  
20      "Thanks for the heads up. During your meetings, definitely  
21      push back with the 17th February Commanders stressing the  
22      good working relationship and operational need for the  
23      mission to continue off compound moves with the QRF members."

24          So, he's certainly reflecting at that point that at  
25      least in the past there had been a good working relationship

1 and operational need. And then he goes on to say "OPO would  
2 support your hiring of the QRF members on a PSA basis." I'm  
3 not sure myself what PSA stands for. Do you know what that  
4 acronym stands for?

5 A I can't recall what it stands for, no.

6 Q I mean, he indicates a little further down in the  
7 paragraph that RSOs have brought on employees using a  
8 purchase order to start them immediately while you work to  
9 normalize our employment under the standard PSA process. To  
10 me, not understanding exactly the acronym, it does seem like  
11 the process would be to bring them on so that they would  
12 directly report, as we discussed a little earlier, to DS,  
13 either as direct hires or in some capacity. Does that seem  
14 correct from your perspective?

15 A I didn't write the email, but that sounds to me  
16 what he's trying to get at.

17 Q And do you recall whether or not -- this certainly  
18 indicates a willingness, at least on behalf of the  
19 individuals on this chain, to explore the option of moving to  
20 direct hires. So was it your understanding at the time that  
21 the various parties involved were trying to work toward a  
22 reasonable arrangement to address the security concerns?

23 A That was my understanding, yes, with specifically  
24 this topic.

25 Q So those concerns had been raised. They were

1 ongoing, and they were being addressed by, at least the  
2 parties in this conversation. Is that accurate?

3 A I don't know who Mr. [REDACTED] is, and so I  
4 don't know what his position would be in actually helping, so  
5 I just have limited knowledge, and I can't really reflect on  
6 how helpful Mr. [REDACTED] could be, and I can't even  
7 guess.

8 Q But nothing certainly in this exchange reflects  
9 anything other than a desire to work toward a positive  
10 solution?

11 A Yes.

12 Q So I want to talk to you just a tiny bit before  
13 just moving toward kind of planning for the Ambassador's  
14 trip, because it has come up a little bit, if you could just  
15 talk to us a little bit about [REDACTED]  
16 that the mission had?

17 A Sure. [REDACTED]  
18 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
19 [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
21 [REDACTED]  
22 [REDACTED]  
23 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
24 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
25 [REDACTED]



1 [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]

3 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

4 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

5 A [REDACTED]

6 Q [REDACTED]

7 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

8 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

9 [REDACTED]

10 [REDACTED]

11 [REDACTED]

12 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]

14 [REDACTED]

15 A Yes.

16 Q Okay. And just in a general sense, what was the  
17 plan for a response at the mission in the event of a security  
18 incident?

19 A You know, I have to be very general, because you  
20 cannot plan for every type of event that is going to happen,  
21 and what you can do is prepare each individual for certain  
22 steps that they can take in the event, and you also don't  
23 know where on compound you're going to be when an event  
24 happens. And so just discussing what our reaction would be  
25 to, you know, a small emergency or a large emergency or a

1 medium emergency, was what we really did. Was there more to  
2 your question?

3 Q That is very helpful. So as I understand it -- I'm  
4 just going to try to give you my understanding. You can  
5 correct it.

6 A Sure.

7 Q At lot of the focus was on articulating what  
8 everyone's particular responsibility was, and then adjusting  
9 depending on what the incident would be?

10 A Yes.

11 Q So in that regard and talking about the team that  
12 was then present starting at the beginning of December --

13 A Sorry. Which team?

14 Q The team that takes the mission. So the DS team  
15 plus your other security elements.

16 A Yes.

17 Q We talked a little bit in the first hour about the  
18 local guard force, as well as the QRF. Who would have been  
19 your responsibility?

20 A My responsibility personally?

21 Q Yes.

22 A That is a difficult question, because, like I said,  
23 you can't plan for every circumstance, and what I have been  
24 trained to do since the military is respond to an event, to  
25 an emergency situation. But I can't predict what would

1       happen. I can't -- I mean, that is it. I can't predict  
2       what's going to happen. And so we discussed in generalities  
3       what we would like to see of each other and what we would  
4       like to see of, you know, other individuals.

5           Q     So with regard to, setting aside just the DS agents  
6       team, you and the acting RSO and the RSO, what was the  
7       primary responsibility of the local guard force?

8           A     To warn us of any impending attacks or emergency  
9       situations or visitors or suspicious individuals. They're  
10      really our eyes on the perimeter of our compound.

11          Q     And then what about the internal QRF team?

12          A     The expectation that we had was that they would  
13      make a phone call to 17th February Martyrs Brigade so that a  
14      larger force could assist us in the event of an emergency.

15          Q     And did you have a sense of the size of that force  
16      and the anticipated time that they could get to you?

17          A     My sense was that it was going to be quite a while  
18      before they could respond. We didn't know the exact numbers  
19      of the force that would respond. I mean, I didn't personally  
20      know. I can't speak for anybody else.

21          Q     And during your time, it sounds like -- did you do  
22      drills with your internal QRF and your local guard force on  
23      how to respond?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     Aside from drills, and not talking about the night

1 of the attacks, had there been an incident at the compound  
2 that had required you, again, setting aside drills, to  
3 actually put the plan in place? During your time there?

4 A During my time there? No, not that I recall.

5 Q Had you heard of other prior instances where the  
6 mission had had to, not in a drill setting, but in an actual  
7 setting, respond to a security incident?

8 A Yes.

9 Q And what had you heard about that?

10 A Can you be specific, like the response?

11 Q What had you heard about the response of the local  
12 guard force, and tell me first what incident you had heard  
13 about. Like what was the context, or what you had heard  
14 about how the mission had responded to prior incidents?

15 A I wasn't there during the incident, so I can't  
16 speak to specific actions; but, you know, I had heard about,  
17 you know, there was an explosive device that was thrown over  
18 the wall. I had heard about a device that was placed on the  
19 wall. And those are the only two that I can recall right  
20 now.

21 Q Okay. And what was your understanding of how the  
22 local guard force had responded? You had said to me that  
23 their main responsibility was really to warn of the incident.  
24 What was your understanding as to how they had performed that  
25 function in the past?

1           A     During those incidents?

2           Q     Yes, during those incidents we talked about.

3           A     Because I wasn't there, like I said, I don't know  
4 exactly how they responded to either of them, to either of  
5 the incidents that I mentioned.

6           Q     Had you heard anything negative or anything  
7 positive?

8           A     No.

9           Q     What about with regard to the QRF? Had you heard  
10 how they had responded with regard to the two incidents that  
11 you had heard about?

12          A     I heard that they responded, but I don't know how  
13 they responded or what their reaction was.

14          Q     Do you have a recollection in general of whether it  
15 was a positive reaction, a negative reaction? Were there  
16 concerns? Did people feel they had performed adequately?

17          A     I don't know.

18          Q     So when did you first learn, when did you first  
19 hear that the Ambassador was planning to visit Benghazi?

20          A     I can't recall the exact date.

21          Q     And you don't have to give me an exact date. And  
22 to the extent you remember, generally, do you feel like it  
23 was 2 weeks beforehand? It couldn't have been more than,  
24 obviously, a month before hand because you weren't quite  
25 there.

1 A Correct.

2 Q Was it 2 weeks? Was it --

3 A I remember hearing, you know, we were talking about  
4 the Ambassador coming, but we weren't sure exactly when. And  
5 in the past, he had changed his schedule, which is not  
6 uncommon. And so --

7 Q Fair enough. So just tell me generally what you  
8 and your team in Benghazi did?

9 Ms. Safai. I'm sorry. Can we take a 2-minute break?

10 Ms. Sawyer. Absolutely. Off the record.

11 [Discussion off the record.]

12 BY MS. SAWYER:

13 Q We are back on the record, and I just want the  
14 record to reflect that Congressman Cummings has joined us, so  
15 he may have a few questions for you as well. I was going to  
16 have you just continue and just briefly explain to us, if you  
17 would, kind of in terms of planning for the Ambassador's  
18 trip, what did you and the team in Benghazi do in advance of  
19 his trip to plan for it?

20 A We did numerous preparations. You know, one thing  
21 we were looking for was the schedule so that we could  
22 determine every single location that he was potentially going  
23 to go to so that we could scout those locations out and, you  
24 know, determine the security situation at each location. We  
25 also, you know, tried to find out who the individuals were he

1 wanted to meet, and kind of their background. We made sure  
2 that all of our vehicles were, you know, working properly. I  
3 mean, we prepared -- we talked about any security concerns  
4 that we might have during the time. We talked about -- I  
5 mean, there are numerous, numerous things that we did in  
6 preparation. You know, I can go on for a long time.

7 Q And in this context, who was involved in that  
8 preparation?

9 A I was. I had conversations with [REDACTED]. I  
10 also had conversations with [REDACTED]. We had group  
11 conversations regarding how we need to prepare, and we could  
12 bounce ideas off of each other to come up with the best  
13 preparation we could provide with what we had.

14 Q So that those conversations were among your DS team  
15 in Benghazi?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Were you ever involved in conversations planning  
18 for the trip with anyone in Tripoli?

19 A I was privy to a couple of the emails that went  
20 back and forth, but I don't recall, you know, I don't recall  
21 what the emails detailed, and I don't remember who else was  
22 on the emails.

23 Q How about planning? Did you do any planning with  
24 individuals [REDACTED] in advance of the  
25 Ambassador's trip?

1 A Yes, I did.

2 Q And who did you meet with [REDACTED] to do  
3 that planning?

4 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
5 [REDACTED] Those are really, you know, the two key ones  
6 that I can remember, but it was a big visit, and so I can't  
7 recall every person who was involved.

8 Q And with regard [REDACTED], what was the  
9 intent behind that conversation?

10 A I can't remember the specifics, but I mean, the  
11 intent was preparation for the Ambassador's arrival.

12 Q [REDACTED]  
13 [REDACTED]

14 A Yes.

15 Q Do you recall who it was you met with?

16 A No.

17 Q Did [REDACTED] [REDACTED] have any particular security  
18 recommendations that they made to you to prepare for the  
19 Ambassador's trip?

20 A DS is the leading protection agency in the world,  
21 and we operate in great environments and terrible  
22 environments. And as a security professional myself, you  
23 know, if they brought something to the table, I would  
24 consider it. However, it was us DS agents who laid the field  
25 for the secure environment for the Ambassador.



1           Q     And in doing that, you said that you discussed  
2     specific security concerns that you might have. Did you come  
3     up with my particularized recommendations relative to --  
4     let's just set aside for now off-compound moves -- but while  
5     the Ambassador was going to be on compound with all of you,  
6     did you have any particular security steps that you took that  
7     changed for the Ambassador's visit?

8           A     Yes. Because, you know, I was in charge of the  
9     local guard force, one of my options I had was to request  
10    additional guards, which I did during one of the meetings on  
11    compound.

12          Q     When you say "meetings on compound," among your DS  
13    team in talking about additional guards for the entirety of  
14    the Ambassador's visit?

15          A     No. Just for if -- there was a meeting that we had  
16    on compound, and in preparation for that meeting, I ensured  
17    that we had additional, you know, I think -- I can't be  
18    certain on the number that I asked for, but we had an  
19    additional guard or additional guards in preparation for this  
20    meeting. What was your question again? Sorry.

21          Q     When you say for this meeting, was it one of the  
22    meetings that was planned while the Ambassador was going to  
23    be there?

24          A     Yes.

25          Q     Okay. And do you recall which meeting that was,

1 just in terms of who it would have been with?

2 A Sure. We had several -- you know, my memory is  
3 pretty foggy, but we had several diplomats who came on  
4 compound, and they met with Ambassador Stevens, and because  
5 of the number of people coming in, I requested the additional  
6 staff.

7 Q And had that request been approved?

8 A Yes.

9 Q So the request that you made for the additional  
10 guards for a particular meeting, as best you can recall, it  
11 was diplomats, based on the number of folks, was approved?

12 A Yes.

13 Q Were there other requests that you made with regard  
14 to changing the security posture for the Ambassador's visits?

15 A Yes. We had discussions on host government  
16 support, the police support; and, you know, I don't remember  
17 if it was me that came up with which recommendations or  
18 anything like that, but we came up with several  
19 recommendations, or several security enhancements that we  
20 would have liked to go have seen on compound and off  
21 compound, you know, by the police or whichever militia could  
22 support us or the government.

23 Q And do you know if those requests were ever made of  
24 the host government for more police support?

25 A I remember seeing -- I believe I actually drafted

1 the letter to be sent, but because I'm not, you know, the  
2 principal officer, I don't send the documents. I don't  
3 know -- I can't speak to whether it was given or not.

4 Q Do you know the status of that request?

5 A No.

6 Q When we were talking a little bit about the  
7 conversations [REDACTED] in advance of the Ambassador's  
8 meeting, you said they may have made recommendation, but  
9 that ultimately DS is responsible for setting up an  
10 environment to secure the Ambassador's safety?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Do you remember, [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED] what would be  
14 done?

15 A You know, I don't recall.

16 Q Do you recall what the general agreement was, not  
17 specific to the Ambassador's visit?

18 A Like we talked about earlier, [REDACTED]

19 [REDACTED], [REDACTED]  
20 [REDACTED]  
21 Q And do you recall what those expectations were?

22 A Not specifically, no.

23 Q So just taking a step back, and understanding that  
24 you might not recall the specifics, and I don't need to know  
25 the exact time, date, but during the planning, just among

1 your DS team, was there ever a recommendation that the  
2 Ambassador not come to Benghazi?

3 A I recall discussing that as a possibility, but I  
4 don't know where that went after the discussion with, you  
5 know, the RSOs on compound.

6 Q And was that your recommendation? Somebody else's  
7 recommendation?

8 A I don't know.

9 Q When you met [REDACTED], do you recall anyone  
10 [REDACTED] ever recommending to you or that you overheard,  
11 that the Ambassador not come to Benghazi?

12 A I don't know. I can't recall anything.

13 Q I know I'm almost out of time. I know that the  
14 Congressman may have some questions for you. I know he's  
15 also very interested in hearing about your experience the  
16 night of.

17 Ms. Sawyer. I don't know if you guys are okay with  
18 having him walk through, and then eventually we could take  
19 the break for lunch and he has an opportunity to just walk us  
20 through. But I don't know, Congressman Cummings, if you had  
21 some questions before.

22 Mr. Cummings. No. First of all, thank you very much.  
23 [REDACTED], I want to thank you for your service. I know  
24 you've been through a lot. I'm very familiar generally with  
25 your story and all that you've been through, and I know it --

1 I'm sure it has been very hard on you and difficult, and I  
2 truly thank you for your service, and I thank you for being  
3 here.

4 If you would be kind enough to just kind of take us  
5 through the night of the event as best you can, and later on,  
6 counsel on both sides, I guess, will flesh it out a little  
7 bit, but would just like to hear if you can take me through  
8 that night.

9 Ms. Safai. Can we go off the record for one second?

10 [Discussion off the record.]

11 Ms. Sawyer. Back on the record. So before we break for  
12 lunch, I think the Congressman just wanted to, again, express  
13 his appreciation because he may not be able to join us for  
14 the afternoon session.

15 Mr. Cummings. Again, I thank you. I know it has been  
16 difficult, but I'm just wondering how has all of this  
17 affected you? I mean, can you tell us? And that is, when I  
18 say that, I mean going through this process and how has it  
19 been on your family?

20 Mr. [REDACTED]. Sir, it has been a long 2-1/2 years since  
21 the event. I have definitely been affected. My family has  
22 definitely been affected. You know, but I look at this as a  
23 learning experience really.

24 Mr. Cummings. As a what?

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. As a learning experience. And I think my

1 family does, too. Now [REDACTED], it gives us a  
2 chance to decompress [REDACTED], really, and get back  
3 into my career, get back being a special agent.

4 Mr. Cummings. Do you worry about the disclosure of your  
5 identity and your family, and do you have concerns about that  
6 with regard to your safety and security?

7 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes. My name was already mentioned, you  
8 know, in a couple of cases. And each time it is, you know,  
9 it brings more notoriety to my name and to me as a person.  
10 And so when I walk around the State Department, you know, I'm  
11 just trying to be a special agent. I'm just trying to do my  
12 job, and I don't need the extra hoopla that goes along with  
13 it. Security-wise, absolutely it is a concern.

14 Mr. Cummings. Just this morning, I wanted to get here  
15 earlier, but we honored an officer who, a member of the  
16 District of Columbia Police, who was at the Navy Yard; and he  
17 came upon an active shooting, and he was shot at.  
18 Fortunately it just hit his vest, but he was able to take out  
19 the shooter. I mean, he was saying that he didn't want the  
20 attention. We were giving him an award. He didn't want the  
21 attention. He was just doing his job.

22 And the one thing he said that really kind of meant a  
23 lot to all of us, and that was that 12 people died, and he  
24 probably saved 30 or 40. He said he was upset that he didn't  
25 get there sooner. I mean, he got very emotional about it.

1 And so I just want to thank you. I really mean that, on  
2 behalf of a grateful Nation and Congress, I really, really  
3 appreciate you; and I wish you nothing but the best, and your  
4 family.

5 Mr. [REDACTED] Thank you, sir..

6 Ms. Sawyer. We'll go off the record.

7 [Discussion off the record.]  
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2 Ms. Jackson. All right.. We'll go back on the record.  
3 It is approximately 1:37. And we're going to begin the  
4 majority's second hour of questioning.

5 BY MS. JACKSON:

6 Q I want to go back and first follow up on a few  
7 things that were talked about in the last hour regarding just  
8 general preparedness and planning for the Ambassador's trip  
9 to Benghazi. But before I go there, I don't think we've  
10 asked you directly, what was your overall sense of the  
11 security situation in Benghazi? And to the extent that you  
12 learned of prior incidents and things, did you see a  
13 trendline of any kind?

14 A Prior to going to Benghazi, I saw the incidents  
15 that -- I read them in the news. So prior to going there, I  
16 realized the situation wasn't good.

17 Upon arriving and talking to the other RSOs there and  
18 really diving into the news coming out of Benghazi or hearing  
19 about the assassination attempts or the incidents against the  
20 Brits, for example, piecing those together, I didn't see any  
21 trends. It was all bad.

22 Was there a trend in anything specific? Not that I  
23 could see. But at the same time, maybe I did. It was 2-1/2  
24 years ago.

25 Q And while you were there, were there intelligence



1 products that came to you, either open source or State  
2 Department or from other agencies, such as AFRICOM, or the  
3 agency?

4 A Nothing comes to mind specifically. One of my  
5 duties as an ARSO there was to monitor open source news  
6 networks and Twitter. And that was actually, in my opinion,  
7 Twitter was the best resource for information because people  
8 were updating their tweets real time when things were  
9 happening.

10 Q So you found that beneficial.

11 A Yes.

12 Q And what type of information would you get off the  
13 Twitter feed?

14 A If we received word that there was an assassination  
15 attempt or some kind of security incident or an emergency, I  
16 could look it up on Twitter. And I can think of one instance  
17 where, basically, people who were at the scene or near the  
18 scene were tweeting about what they saw. They were tweeting  
19 about who was arriving.

20 And is it credible? Who knows. But it gave me more of  
21 an understanding of what was really happening at the scene or  
22 what people were really seeing on the scene.

23 Q Okay. And I don't think we asked you this  
24 specifically in the first hour, but Benghazi was your first  
25 overseas deployment as a DS agent -- obviously, outside of

1 your military experience -- or had you been on any other  
2 TDYs?

3 A That's a good question. I can't recall exactly.  
4 I've been on many, many, many assignments overseas, often  
5 temporary. One instance is I was TDY to the Secretary's  
6 detail for a period of time. I really can't remember the  
7 dates of that. So --

8 Q Were those before or after you were in Benghazi?

9 A I can't recall.

10 Q Okay. So you had done several TDYs on the  
11 Secretary's -- or several trips on the Secretary's detail to  
12 overseas locations?

13 A Yes.

14 Q Was Benghazi your first high-threat post that you  
15 went on in any of those trips? Or was it the only  
16 high-threat post?

17 A I think it was my first and only high-threat post  
18 with Diplomatic Security.

19 Q And if you know, was yours a similar background to  
20 [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]?

21 A I spoke with [REDACTED] about -- what information are you  
22 looking for, I guess.

23 Q Was going to Benghazi on the TDY essentially his  
24 first overseas experience to a post?

25 A I have no idea.

1           Q     Okay. I didn't know if you had talked about it or  
2     not. Do you know if Agent [REDACTED] had done some Secretary  
3     protection details to overseas?

4           A     We might have talked about it, but at this time I  
5     can't remember.

6           Q     Okay. And back to the sort of physical security on  
7     the compound. The local guard force that you worked with,  
8     did they have specific assignments? I believe you said you  
9     had about five there. I mean, did you have two at one gate,  
10    two at another gate, one roving, or one at the third gate?  
11    Can you tell us what their sort of general assignments were?

12          A     Sure. I can't remember the specifics, so I might  
13    not get them all correct, but we had somebody at the main  
14    gate that we used. We had the guard force commander, we had  
15    a rover, and we had people at the other two gates as well.  
16    There might have been additional guards to reinforce those  
17    posts, but I can't recall how many exactly we had.

18          Q     And the QRF, where were they generally stationed  
19    when they were not doing movements with you?

20          A     Generally, they were in the QRF house.

21          Q     And did they have cameras to monitor, video feeds  
22    to monitor, or were they just there to be available?

23          A     One of their duties was to patrol the compound.  
24    And other than that, it was mainly to just be available when  
25    we needed them.

1 Q They brought their own weapons with them, correct?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Were they augmented in any way, such as did they  
4 have vehicles that had machine guns posted on them or mounted  
5 on them?

6 A No.

7 Q Nothing. And you heard the term "technical"?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Did they have technicals that they brought to the  
10 compound?

11 A The QRF?

12 Q Correct.

13 A No.

14 Q Were technicals common in and around Benghazi?

15 A Common is kind of relative. Have I seen them  
16 around Benghazi? Yes..

17 Q Would you see them daily when you were out? Would  
18 you see them essentially --

19 A If I went out in Benghazi, I would see them, yes.

20 Mr. Westmoreland. Were they as common as a pickup truck  
21 in Georgia?

22 Mr. [REDACTED] No, sir, not that common.

23 Mr. Westmoreland. Let me ask you, when you were talking  
24 about those, what, pendants --

25 Mr. [REDACTED] IDNS pendant.

1           Mr. Westmoreland. The local guard force was at these  
2 different locations and they were supposed to be the guys  
3 sounding the alarm.

4           Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

5           Mr. Westmoreland. Did each one of them have a pendant?

6           Mr. [REDACTED] I can't recall, sir. I don't know. I  
7 can't remember.

8           Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. And I know two of the gates  
9 were operable, and I think you said that the south gate you  
10 couldn't really get in it, or was it operable too?

11          Mr. [REDACTED] All the gates could be opened.

12          Mr. Westmoreland. All the gates could be opened. Okay.  
13 If they didn't have the pendant, or whatever, was there  
14 an alarm button there?

15          Mr. [REDACTED] No.

16          Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So were they going to yell?

17          Mr. [REDACTED] No, they had radios.

18          Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. So they would have used the  
19 radio, but the radio wouldn't put out the same alarm as  
20 quickly as if there had been some type of an emergency  
21 button. Couldn't you activate the duck and -- what is it,  
22 duck and cover --

23          Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

24          Mr. Westmoreland. -- from the --

25          Mr. [REDACTED] Not that I remember, sir. To answer the

1 question, I don't know how long it would take for a man to  
2 run over from where he was standing when the attack or  
3 emergency happened, to run from his position to the button to  
4 push it. I don't know if that is faster or to get on the  
5 radio and say, "Attack, attack, attack," and a button is  
6 pushed. I wouldn't be able to time --

7 Mr. Westmoreland. No, I understand. I got you. I was  
8 just wondering.

9 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

10 Mr. Westmoreland. So it would be by radio if there was  
11 something going on?

12 Mr. [REDACTED] If somebody did not have a pendant, it  
13 would be by radio, yes.

14 Mr. Westmoreland. And he would radio the TOC or would  
15 he radio Blue Mountain folks? I mean, would he radio the  
16 response force?

17 Mr. [REDACTED] The radios that we had were all keyed to  
18 a similar channel, so that if a guard were to say the words  
19 attack, attack, attack, or anything else, everybody on the  
20 compound who had a radio could hear that.

21 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. But you wouldn't know which  
22 gate it was coming from?

23 Mr. [REDACTED] I hesitate to answer because part of our  
24 instructions to the LGF, to the local guard force, was to  
25 inform us which gate.

1           Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

2           Mr. [REDACTED] Just for our situational awareness. So  
3 usually it would be -- an example might be, "Attack, attack,  
4 attack. Charlie One."

5           BY MS. JACKSON:

6           Q     And did you have camera support at each of those  
7 gates? A camera on each of the gates?

8           A     I can't remember the camera placement, but they  
9 were around the perimeter.

10          Q     Did you have sufficient number of cameras such that  
11 you could monitor all of the compound?

12          A     I can't recall if that was one of my concerns.

13          Q     It's our understanding that it's a matter of policy  
14 and procedure that you have what are called react plans at a  
15 post. You're aware of what I'm talking about when I say a  
16 react plan?

17          A     Yes, ma'am.

18          Q     Okay. And you have different react plans for  
19 different scenarios. Is that correct?

20          A     Yes, ma'am.

21          Q     Like one for fire, one for -- could be some  
22 other -- could be a natural disaster, could be an attack. Is  
23 that correct?

24          A     Yes, ma'am.

25          Q     Did you have react plans in Benghazi?

1 A As far as I remember, yes.

2 Q Do you recall if you had a react plan in the event  
3 of an attack on the compound?

4 A I can't remember if it was -- do you have a  
5 document?

6 Q I actually don't.

7 A I don't remember.

8 Q Okay. In your conversations among the DS team that  
9 was on there, did you talk about how you would react in the  
10 event of an attack?

11 A Yes.

12 Q And did you have similar conversations [REDACTED]

13 [REDACTED]?

14 A Yes.

15 Q And what was -- among the DS team -- what was your  
16 general response going to be, understanding that every attack  
17 is different? But I am assuming whoever's in the TOC does X  
18 and whoever's outside may do Y. I mean, did you have a  
19 generalized plan like that?

20 A Yes.

21 Q And what was that?

22 A As you said, the person in the TOC, or nearest the  
23 TOC, would be our communication to other posts and also be  
24 able to manage the intercom system, manage the cameras, and  
25 could relay kind of positions and what the situation was.



1 But that was really -- that's really the only static position  
2 that was similar for our react plans. I say plans because we  
3 had several of them, because even though you say an attack  
4 react plan, attacks can happen in many, many different ways  
5 and from many different directions and with many different  
6 types of weapons. And so as a special agent I prepare for as  
7 many of them as I can possibly think of, and then I go to my  
8 colleagues to get their input so we can cover any gaps. But  
9 I would be uncomfortable with saying what one of our react  
10 plans was without getting into the specifics of an attack.

11 Q Okay. Had you discussed your reaction to an attack  
12 like the one you experienced? Had that been part of your  
13 preplanning and discussions?

14 A A similar -- nothing was exact. But was it in  
15 fact, yes, did we plan for an attack similar to this? Yes.

16 Q Okay. And because you are the security expert and  
17 knew what your resources were, was part of your react plan  
18 for an attack to call upon [REDACTED] to support  
19 you and supplement your capabilities?

20 A Yes.

21 Q You seemed to hesitate. So can you explain?

22 A Because when an attack happens, it doesn't happen  
23 over -- you don't have time to prepare and you don't have  
24 time to wait for help to arrive. You need to react  
25 immediately.

1 Q Right.

2 A And as special agents, our plan was to react  
3 immediately. Had [REDACTED] been able to help us out,  
4 great. But did we rely on that as part of our -- was it  
5 extremely reliable? No. Because you can't -- you just can't  
6 plan for that.

7 Mr. Westmoreland. Was the reaction plan different if  
8 the Ambassador was there than if the Ambassador was not  
9 there? In other words, I know that he brought -- or two  
10 agents, I think, came with him.

11 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes, sir.

12 Mr. Westmoreland. And once the Ambassador gets on the  
13 compound, does his security change as far as personnel? In  
14 other words, I mean, does he have different personnel if he's  
15 on the compound or off the compound? Are different people in  
16 charge, depending on the different locations?

17 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. If he was off the compound, who would  
19 be in charge of his security?

20 Mr. [REDACTED] It would be the AIC, or the agent in  
21 charge.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. That had came with him.

23 Mr. [REDACTED] The AIC can be changed.

24 Mr. Westmoreland. Who was the AIC when he was there?

25 Mr. [REDACTED] It changed. So at one point it could

1 have been me. At one point it could have been Agent

2 [REDACTED]. These are just examples.

3 Mr. Westmoreland. Sure. Okay. So there wasn't any  
4 set, okay, he's on the compound, you're in charge of his  
5 security. He's going over here, this person.

6 Mr. [REDACTED]. In a protective detail somebody has the  
7 position of AIC. That position is filled at all times.

8 Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah, I got you. But was there a  
9 different plan, a different emergency plan with the  
10 Ambassador being there as far as --

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. In a react plan we don't discern really  
12 -- on compound, a react plan, you don't discern between  
13 necessarily against rank and human life. You just say,  
14 you're an IT person, you're an Ambassador, we put you  
15 together, and we secure both, just as a State Department  
16 employee. That's what react plans do, is they protect  
17 Americans. So, as an American, we are protecting --

18 Mr. Westmoreland. But I don't want to dwell on it, but  
19 if the Ambassador is there, or IMO, you would take them to a  
20 safe room, correct? I mean, I'm assuming.

21 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. And if they weren't there, would the  
23 DS agents go into a defensive -- I mean, you all wouldn't --  
24 I mean, they wouldn't all run and get into a safe room, I'm  
25 assuming. If you were under attack, wouldn't you take some

1 defensive positions or, you know --

2 Mr. [REDACTED] Would the react -- can you, I guess, just  
3 clarify your question? I apologize.

4 Mr. Westmoreland. My wife says I'm a terrible  
5 communicator. Let's try to work through this.

6 The Ambassador's there with whoever comes with him and  
7 there is an attack. I'm sure that it's somebody's job -- the  
8 AIC or whatever -- to get the Ambassador, and maybe whoever  
9 else is with him, or whatever, and take the Ambassador to a  
10 safe room or a vault or some type of situation. And I am  
11 assuming the other agents would disperse or try to figure  
12 out -- evaluate the situation with the agent in charge and  
13 whoever else in the safe room.

14 Let's say the Ambassador is not there and there is an  
15 attack. I would imagine that you all would not -- or the DS  
16 agents wouldn't go into a safe room. They would disperse --  
17 or would you? I mean, I probably would. But, I mean, but  
18 you would and try to evaluate the situation. Was there a  
19 specific plan if the Ambassador was there, and how was it  
20 different than if he hadn't been there?

21 Mr. [REDACTED] There really isn't a difference.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

23 Mr. [REDACTED] The Ambassador is an American, just like  
24 the IMO and just like the --

25 Mr. Westmoreland. Principal officer.

1           Mr. [REDACTED] Principal officer. Thank you. And  
2 regardless, we're going to put the nonagents in a safe area,  
3 and the other agents respond to the incident.

4           Mr. Westmoreland. Sure. And so there's always a  
5 principal officer or ambassador or IMO or something at the  
6 compound all the time.

7           Mr. [REDACTED] There was when I was there.

8           Mr. Westmoreland. Okay.

9           BY MS. JACKSON:

10          Q    I just want to circle back for a minute to the  
11 communication devices, the radios that they had. You said  
12 that the local guard force had radios. I assume the agents  
13 had radios too.

14          Were there any technical problems with the radios that  
15 you all had? Were there any difficulties in your  
16 communication devices, either in their use or I think another  
17 word is interoperability. Basically, could everybody talk to  
18 everybody else over the radios?

19          A    I don't recall any technical issues with the  
20 radios. There could have been, I just don't recall them.

21          Is there another part?

22          Q    No, just pretty much were there any technical  
23 problems either with the radios or one radio not being able  
24 to communicate directly with another type radio?

25          A    I don't recall, ma'am.

1 Q Okay. All right. How did you communicate with the  
2 [REDACTED]? Was it over the phone, was it by radio, or did  
3 you have multiple means of communication [REDACTED]  
4 [REDACTED]?

5 A We had multiple means of communication.

6 Q At least telephone and radio?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Did you have anything in addition to that?

9 A I suppose email. Those are the only ones I can  
10 think of.

11 Q Okay. And then, just to conclude on the react  
12 plan, if you hadn't -- was there any part of the plan that if  
13 you had notice of, you know, some sort of notice that an  
14 attack was imminent, did you have an evacuation or -- an  
15 evacuation plan from the compound?

16 A Yes.

17 Q Okay. [REDACTED]

18 A That was one option.

19 Q You had other locations, depending on the direction  
20 the attack was coming from and things like that?

21 A Direction of the attack, size of the attack, type  
22 of attack, yes.

23 Q Okay. And I'm assuming that whoever was in the TOC  
24 would be a person who was notifying DS Command Center. Did  
25 you have a direct line to main State, the Command Center, or

1 did your communications go to Tripoli?

2 A I wasn't in the TOC that night.

3 Q Right.

4 A So I don't know who he communicated with or how he  
5 communicated with him. To answer your question, the DS  
6 Command Center operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365  
7 days a year, so they are always open.

8 Q You didn't have, like, the red emergency phone?

9 A I did not have a Bat Phone.

10 Q I was going to use the term Bat Phone, but I  
11 thought someone would laugh.

12 A We can laugh.

13 Q Was there a Bat Phone to Tripoli?

14 A There was a telephone that we could use.

15 Q Was it black?

16 A So, I mean, the communication lines were available.

17 Q But there wasn't a dedicated phone. It was just --

18 A Not that I recall.

19 Q All right. Okay.

20 In planning for the Ambassador's trip, you had told us a  
21 couple of things earlier. One, it had been at least  
22 discussed that the trip should be canceled, and that the  
23 dates of it changed over time that you were there. Do you  
24 recall if the trip was shortened in duration?

25 A I do not recall.

1 Q Okay. Do you remember if there was any particular  
2 concern over the dates that he was going to be in Benghazi,  
3 being in September, and specifically over the 9/11  
4 anniversary?

5 A Yes, ma'am.

6 Q And what were those concerns?

7 A The concerns were that September 11 is a date that  
8 every American will remember forever, much like Pearl Harbor,  
9 and we need to -- we needed to be certain that we understood  
10 the gravity of what that was.

11 Q Do you recall that either you as a DS team or the  
12 Tripoli DS team in conjunction with the Ambassador made the  
13 affirmative decision to have all of his meetings on compound  
14 that day, on September 11?

15 A My recollection is that I was part of a discussion  
16 that decided that, yes.

17 Q And the Ambassador readily agreed to that?

18 A Yes, ma'am.

19 Q Okay. Do you recall whether you or the other  
20 agents had a recommendation as to how many agents should come  
21 in with the Ambassador to provide protection during his  
22 visit?

23 A I recall a discussion we had with numbers and us as  
24 a team coming up with reasons and numbers. I can't recall  
25 the reasons, nor can I recall the numbers that we came up



1 with. But, yes.

2 Q You were interviewed by the Accountability Review  
3 Board. Is that correct?

4 A Yes, ma'am.

5 Q That occurred about a month or so after the attack,  
6 give or take?

7 A Yes.

8 Q Do you recall talking to them, to the ARB, about  
9 the number of agents you thought were sufficient or were  
10 needed for his visit?

11 A I don't remember the number, no.

12 Q Would that have been a time when it was fresher in  
13 your mind as to what you may have recommended?

14 A Yes.

15 Q Okay. We'll go with that.

16 At any time in the planning of the Ambassador's trip was  
17 there ever a discussion about having the State Department  
18 personnel [REDACTED] be at the same location,  
19 stay at the same location, either at the Special Mission  
20 Compound [REDACTED]

21 A Yes.

22 Q What can you tell us about those discussions?

23 A That we had discussions about that topic.

24 Q Do you recall whether it was [REDACTED]

25 a DS suggestion or was there a consensus as to --

1 A I don't recall whose suggestion it was, no.

2 Q Okay. What was your opinion?

3 A I can't remember my opinion from back then. There  
4 were a lot of things going on. I would have to become  
5 familiar with all the stuff again to really --

6 Mr. Westmoreland. Do you ever remember having a  
7 specific conversation with the [REDACTED] where they were  
8 asked by somebody on the DS team, asking advice of them,  
9 would you come in heavy or light with the Ambassador? Do you  
10 ever remember a conversation, whatever light and heavy means?

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. Who asked the question, sir?

12 Mr. Westmoreland. The DS agent -- a DS agent would have  
13 asked one of -- or the [REDACTED] at some time.

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. The [REDACTED]?

15 Mr. Westmoreland. Yeah, the [REDACTED] yeah, do you  
16 think the Ambassador needs to come in heavy or light? And  
17 I'm assuming heavy and light meant with a few people or more  
18 people.

19 Mr. [REDACTED]. Like I said previously, my agency, we do  
20 protection around the world, and we have way more experience  
21 than any other agency in this.

22 Mr. Westmoreland. I wasn't trying to say that that was  
23 not true. I think that some [REDACTED] had been there  
24 -- in there longer than what some of the DS agents had been,  
25 so it would have been asking more about their experience, as

1 they have been there, because some of them were there I think  
2 when the actual IED thing. So I wasn't trying to say that  
3 you all don't know your business. I'm just saying maybe from  
4 previous experience.

5 Mr. [REDACTED] I don't recall that, sir.

6 Ms. Jackson. Agent [REDACTED], I want to hand you what  
7 I've marked as exhibit number 4.

8 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 4

9 was marked for identification.]

10 Ms. Jackson. It's very short. A few words. And  
11 probably that's because you wrote it. And for the record, I  
12 would note that this is document number C05411351. It's an  
13 email from [REDACTED] to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
14 dated September 9, 2012. I'll give you a minute to look at  
15 that.

16 BY MS. JACKSON:

17 Q Okay. Do you recall this email, now that you've  
18 reviewed it?

19 A I don't recall this email, but evidence shows that  
20 I wrote it.

21 Q Okay. I read this as sort of a to-do list of  
22 things that need to be done in advance of the Ambassador's  
23 trip to Benghazi. Would you agree with my assessment?

24 A Yes.

25 Q Okay. Can you take us through this list and tell

1 us what some of these things mean? It's written in brevity.  
2 But like "develop call signs." What's a call sign?

3 A A call sign is an alternate name so that when  
4 you're on the radio speaking you're not using your real name.  
5 So you're not identifying yourself on the radio.

6 Q And then if you could walk us through the rest of  
7 this list and tell us what are the things that -- you're  
8 creating a list of things that need to be done in advance of  
9 the Ambassador's arrival.

10 A Sure.

11 "Develop call signs." Each of us had a call sign on our  
12 compound, and we wanted to ensure that we established call  
13 signs for the visitors coming in so that, like us, we didn't  
14 say our names directly on the radio.

15 [REDACTED] I can't remember what that  
16 necessarily pertains to. We did have -- we had a movement  
17 where we had asked for additional support because, with the  
18 number of people we had, we thought it would be safer with  
19 additional folks helping us.

20 [REDACTED] is really -- what I can recall  
21 now -- is really for Ambassador Stevens to introduce himself  
22 [REDACTED], because being an Ambassador you're in  
23 charge of everybody, and it's important to introduce himself.

24 "Prepare Security Brief and REACT Plan." That means  
25 make sure the security brief is ready for these guys to come

1 in.

2 Q Is that for the Ambassador and the DS agents that  
3 were accompanying him?

4 A Yes, ma'am.

5 Q You were going to do a security brief and tell them  
6 what your react plan was once they arrived?

7 A A security brief is different than the react plan.  
8 So the security brief is in reference to the security  
9 situation in Benghazi. It gives you kind of a personal  
10 security checklist: things to think about, things to prepare  
11 for, how to be prepared.

12 The react plan. Because our plans included the number  
13 of agents we had currently, I wanted to be sure that the  
14 additional agents could easily be fit into our react plan to  
15 bolster our current security.

16 "Day and Night Drill." Like we discussed previously, we  
17 do drills. That's how you ensure that you are prepared for  
18 an attack or prepared for an emergency. And having two  
19 visitors and an Ambassador on compound is no exception. And  
20 we wanted to include the Ambassador and the agents in the  
21 drill so that we could be more prepared.

22 "Plan positions." This is the same thing. This is the  
23 same thing. Just reinforcing the react plan and where people  
24 might stand. With two additional agents, we could create  
25 potentially two additional locations for them to be in or two

1 additional people to react, however they might see fit.

2 "Sleeping Locations." I think that's pretty obvious.

3 "Ensure we have enough visitor badges." That was in  
4 preparation for the meetings we were going to have on  
5 compound. We were expecting visitors to come on.

6 "Extra QRF rovers." I don't recall what that  
7 specifically meant.

8 Q Did the QRF patrol outside the perimeter of the  
9 compound?

10 A No.

11 Q No?

12 A No.

13 Q Is it my understanding that a rover is someone,  
14 though, who is walking the perimeter, either inside or  
15 outside?

16 A Yes.

17 Q I assume rove means roving, and they are moving.

18 A Yes, ma'am.

19 Q Okay. So it appears that you at least wanted to  
20 discuss whether you needed extra rovers when the Ambassador  
21 was there.

22 A You know what, I'm not really sure. It could have  
23 meant several things.

24 Q Okay.

25 A I can't discern which.

1           Q     And then the last one is to have the local guard  
2     force announce the visitors' arrival.

3           A     Yes.

4           Q     Do you recall whether this list was expanded or  
5     contracted at all?

6           A     I don't recall.

7           Q     Okay. So when the Ambassador arrived on the 10th,  
8     were you part of the contingent that went to the airport to  
9     pick him up and meet him?

10          A     Yes.

11          Q     Did all the agents go?

12          A     No.

13          Q     Do you recall -- one stayed behind?

14          A     Yes.

15          Q     And then when the Ambassador -- did he come  
16     directly to the compound?

17          A     To my recollection, yes.

18          Q     Okay. And did you or any of the other agents talk  
19     to him about the security of the compound or do a walk-around  
20     or anything like that?

21          A     Yes, ma'am.

22          Q     And who did that?

23          A     I did some of it. I can't speak for the others. I  
24     can't recall. I can only recall that I spoke to him about  
25     security.

1 Q And what did you communicate to him about security?

2 A We reinforced -- or I reinforced -- the security  
3 situation that we had on the ground, saying that it's  
4 important that we have the meetings on compound, we would  
5 like to avoid any meetings off compound, if possible.

6 You know, I can't recall anything specifically after  
7 that.

8 Q Did you walk around the compound with the  
9 Ambassador?

10 A I can't recall.

11 Q In part of your discussions with him do you recall  
12 whether he noted any changes that had taken place since he  
13 had been there in 2011 as the Envoy?

14 A I recall that he was surprised -- not necessarily  
15 surprised -- surprised is the wrong word --

16 Q He commented on something?

17 A I recall that he commented on the security  
18 situation, saying that it had changed.

19 Q For the good or the worst?

20 A Based on the information that I gave him, he said  
21 for the worst.

22 Q Were there any other issues that he commented on  
23 while you were discussing the security situation, react  
24 plans, things like that?

25 A Not that I can recall.



1 Q Do you recall if he made any comments on the  
2 physical layout of the compound and any upgrades that may  
3 have been done, like wire on the walls or sandbags or  
4 anything like that?

5 A I don't recall.

6 Q Okay. When you went to the airport to pick up the  
7 Ambassador, other than the DS team and perhaps some Annex  
8 personnel, was there anybody else there to greet him? Any  
9 Libyan officials?

10 A I don't recall.

11 Q Did the Ambassador go to the Annex that afternoon,  
12 that first day that he was there?

13 A I can't be sure if it was on the 10th or 11th, but  
14 we did go over there.

15 Q Okay. Do you know whether the Ambassador had a  
16 security brief when he was at the Annex?

17 A I don't know.

18 Q Okay. Do you recall whether he had a meeting with  
19 the chief of base?

20 A No, I don't recall.

21 Q Okay. Do you recall whether the Ambassador had --  
22 on the 10th -- had dinner at a local hotel?

23 A Yes.

24 Q And do you recall whether or not the Ambassador had  
25 a discussion and perhaps a heated discussion with the owner

1 of the hotel?

2 A My job was to focus on protection, so I'm not privy  
3 to the conversation.

4 Q Could you tell by mannerisms or intensity of the  
5 conversation?

6 A I was focused out.

7 Q Okay. Not on the Ambassador? Okay.

8 A Well --

9 Q It could have been somebody else's job.

10 A No, I mean, when you do protection, yes, you're  
11 focus is on the Ambassador, but you're looking out, you're  
12 not looking at the Ambassador.

13 Q Okay. On the morning of the 11th, was there an  
14 incident that occurred that was concerning to you and the  
15 other agents on the perimeter of the compound?

16 A Yes.

17 Q And what was that?

18 A As I recall it, one of the local guards reported --  
19 not to me -- that there had been a man dressed in -- who they  
20 thought was a police officer, who was in a second story  
21 building, on the second story looking into our compound, and  
22 I believe taking photographs.

23 Q What did you or any of the other agents do in  
24 response to that?

25 A [REDACTED] and I discussed it and immediately

1 reported it through our chain, through [REDACTED], and  
2 basically alerted everybody who needed to know about this  
3 incident.

4 Q Do you know if anybody took any steps to try and  
5 ascertain whether it was in fact a member of the local police  
6 department? A call to the chief of the police or Supreme  
7 Security Council, as I believe it was called.

8 A I don't know.

9 Q Were you aware of protests going on in Cairo that  
10 day?

11 A I don't remember.

12 Q You stated earlier that you followed -- is it  
13 called Twitter feeds? It's Twitter something.

14 A Yes.

15 Q Twitter feeds and stuff. Do you recall whether you  
16 were doing it that day?

17 A No, I don't recall.

18 Q So you don't recall. If there had been something  
19 about a planned protest in Benghazi, would that be the type  
20 of information that you would have been interested in?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Do you recall any such information?

23 A No.

24 Q Did any members of the Annex come to the compound,  
25 Special Mission Compound?

1 A Yes.

2 Q On the 11th?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Do you remember what that was for?

5 A It was to discuss what our guard had seen. And the  
6 other topic was collocating.

7 Q During the Ambassador's trip?

8 A Yes.

9 Q So was there -- essentially somebody was going to  
10 pack up and move?

11 A Yes.

12 Q Was that the State Department personnel packing up  
13 and going to the Annex or the Annex personnel coming to the  
14 compound?

15 A As I recall it, there was a debate, and I was one  
16 of the ARSOs and that's not my battle to fight.

17 Q It was above your pay grade to make that decision?

18 A You could say that.

19 Q Obviously -- well, maybe not obviously -- was it  
20 unresolved or was it an affirmative decision not to  
21 collocate?

22 A I don't know how the decision came to be.

23 Q And was the discussion about collocating limited  
24 solely to the earlier surveillance that day or were there  
25 other factors?

1           A    There were other factors.

2           Q    And do you recall what they were?

3           A    The general security situation in Benghazi was  
4   terrible, and that is a huge factor.

5           Q    On the evening of the 11th, I believe the  
6   Ambassador had dinner with the Turkey General Consul, is that  
7   correct?

8           A    I don't remember what his title was, but he had --

9           Q    Some Turkish official came over?

10          A    Yes, ma'am.

11          Q    Did any security personnel come with this official?

12          A    I don't recall.

13          Q    So you don't recall having any conversation with  
14   anybody that accompanied the Turkish official.

15          A    I do recall him having a vehicle with a driver, but  
16   I don't know if he was security. To my knowledge, he was a  
17   driver.

18          Q    And you didn't have any conversations with that  
19   person.

20          A    No.

21          Q    Okay. And did British officials come over that  
22   evening? Do you recall whether any British officials came  
23   over to drop off vehicles and weapons?

24          A    I remember that happening. I don't remember which  
25   day it was.

1 Q Okay. Did you talk to the British officials when  
2 they came?

3 A Yes.

4 Q Was there any talk of there being protests or  
5 demonstrations in the area?

6 A No. Not that I recall.

7 Q Do you recall having a conversation with them about  
8 general security issues when they dropped off those vehicles?

9 A Not that I recall.

10 Q It's 2:30. I have about 10 minutes left. My next  
11 question is just to ask you generally to describe the attack.  
12 So would you like to take a break at this time before we go  
13 into that?

14 A Yes, please.

15 Q Okay. I thought that might be a good time to do  
16 that.

17 Ms. Jackson. So we'll go off the record and take a  
18 break.

19 [Recess.]  
20  
21  
22  
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BY MS. SAWYER:

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Q So we will go back on the record. It is quarter of 3:00, 2:45. A couple of quick follow-up questions just on the last hour. There were a couple of times where you were talking about conversations that you had been in, and I just want to flesh out who else was involved in those conversations to the extent you can remember.

9

10

11

12

13

And just the first topic was around, I know that you could not recall the exact numbers, but you said that there had been a discussion about the number of agents who should accompany, or might accompany the Ambassador to Benghazi. Who was involved in that conversation that you were in?

14

15

A To my recollection, it was [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

16

17

18

19

20

21

Q And then who -- were you ever involved in a conversation with Tripoli about that question about the number of agents that were going to accompany the Ambassador?

22

23

24

A I think I stated before that I might have been on the emails, but I wasn't the one sending the emails. But I can't recall specifics.

25

A Yes.

1           Q     And to the extent he had verbal conversations as  
2     opposed to email, do you recall being involved in any of  
3     those?

4           A     No, ma'am.

5           Q     Now, you also talked about when the Ambassador had  
6     first gotten there, so jumping now ahead to when he is  
7     actually on the ground with you all, and you had done a  
8     walkaround, at least a portion of a walkaround with him. And  
9     I don't know if it was during that walkaround, it sounded  
10    like there was a discussion about security. I had a specific  
11    question, because I wasn't sure I was understanding whether  
12    you guys were talking specific to security on the compound,  
13    or the security environment more broadly in Benghazi, and I  
14    just wanted a clarification on that.

15          A     As I recall, the security conversation was really  
16    both. Compound security and what our expectations were on  
17    the compound and kind of what we had to work with. But also,  
18    you know, the risks of going out in town and having these  
19    meetings and, you know, how complicated it would be for us to  
20    do these movements in town.

21          Q     And with regard to the around town, off-compound  
22    moves, you indicated that the Ambassador was receptive to  
23    your concerns, in that he did not -- I will just make it a  
24    very specific question. Was there was an instance where you  
25    all recommended during his visit that he conduct a particular



1 meeting on compound or not go off compound and he disagreed?

2 A No, he was very receptive to our recommendations.

3 Q So in that last hour when you were talking about  
4 the broad security conversation, you indicated that there was  
5 a portion of that conversation at least where there was a  
6 discussion of the security situation having changed for the  
7 worse since the time that the Ambassador had been there. And  
8 with regard to that particular description, was that a  
9 description of the security situation in Benghazi, or the  
10 security situation on the compound in particular, and the  
11 security posture of the compound? So I understand if you  
12 can't recall the exact specifics, but just as distinguishing  
13 between those two broad categories.

14 A It was more in regards to the security situation in  
15 Benghazi and the, you know, and the risk that we would have  
16 to take by going out on town. I mean, it was a conversation  
17 regarding really both of those.

18 Q And then just one other conversation that was  
19 discussed. The conversation about co-location. Again, I  
20 understand -- you know, I understand some of the details  
21 aren't as clear, but who was involved in that conversation?

22 A To my recollection, [REDACTED],  
23 and I was there as well. I can't recall the rest of the  
24 folks.

25 Q And I may just not be remembering the exact time.

1 Was the Ambassador there during that conversation?

2 A Yes. As I recall, yes.

3 Q And to the best of your recollection, were the only  
4 people involved people who were located in Benghazi, or was  
5 there participation from anyone from Tripoli, or from  
6 Washington?

7 A I wasn't privy to any other outside conversations,  
8 nor am I the reporting agent to Tripoli, or D.C.

9 Q And I think I just missed it on the last hour, but  
10 did this conversation that we have been talking about occur  
11 on September 11? Was it the day before?

12 A I think I stated before I wasn't sure exactly which  
13 day if it was the 10th or the 11th. But I remember the  
14 conversation happening, you know, on you know, most likely  
15 one of those days.

16 Q So we had also then talked -- you had also talked  
17 with us about on the actual day of the 11th, and the incident  
18 that had occurred earlier in the day, so I just wanted you to  
19 walk us through in a narrative fashion. I'm going to ask a  
20 few questions just if, you know, as follow-up, or to move the  
21 conversation along about the night of the evening, night of.  
22 As we go into this, I know that I mentioned very briefly at  
23 the beginning, I asked if you had had an opportunity to see  
24 the -- at least the unclassified Accountability Review Board  
25 report, and you said you had read portions. I don't know if

1     you have read the portion that I am hopeful you read, and I  
2     do want before we even begin this, just to remind you, as I  
3     said earlier, they were very critical about a number of  
4     things with regards to the platform in Benghazi and things  
5     about it.

6             The one thing they were crystal clear about, and before  
7     we start this part, I just wanted to reiterate, is their  
8     finding and their conclusion that the DS and Annex personnel  
9     on the ground in Benghazi performed with courage and an  
10    overriding desire to protect and rescue their colleagues in a  
11    near-impossible situation. And recognizing that, you had  
12    made tremendous efforts to make sure that you safeguarded all  
13    of the people who were on the mission, and at the Annex, and  
14    there are tremendous success stories.

15            I hope we can talk a little bit about those once you  
16    have had a chance to walk us through. I think those get lost  
17    sometime in the focus on how we can improve going forward.  
18    So I want to also focus a little bit on those. But what I  
19    hoped was that you would walk us through, just starting from  
20    how you first heard, kind of where you were, and how you  
21    first became aware that there was an attack underway?

22            A     Okay, so the evening started with [REDACTED]  
23    [REDACTED] and I sitting at a table near the pool at the end of  
24    the night. Ambassador Stevens had come by and said, I'm  
25    going to bed. Sean Smith said the same thing and went, you

1 know, went inside the villa, and we were just sitting out  
2 kind of relaxing at the end of the night.

3 While we were talking, I started hearing some kind of  
4 chanting, I thought it was. So I told the others, you know,  
5 I told the other two, hang on. Just listen for a minute.  
6 And what we heard was chanting. And it was my impression  
7 that it was coming closer. You know, so immediately when I  
8 realized, you know, that this is a potential security  
9 incident, or a potential something, I said, you know, go get  
10 your gear, right now. I ran into Villa C where the  
11 Ambassador and Sean Smith were and the other two ran in a  
12 different direction.

13 I remember hearing the chants. I mean, they were fairly  
14 close already. I mean, yelling distance, which is pretty  
15 close especially in a city setting. So my impression is that  
16 I don't have much time. So I ran right to my room, you know,  
17 put my helmet on, put my vest on, grabbed my weapons, my  
18 additional weapons, and I turned to lock the gate, and  
19 basically, it was a jail cell door with three locks on it. I  
20 locked all three locks.

21 And at about that time Ambassador Stevens and Sean Smith  
22 were coming out of their rooms. Sean Smith was already, you  
23 know, donning his helmet and vest. I guided them both into  
24 the safe haven, and I set myself up in the safe haven with --  
25 I was holding my M4. I had a pistol, a radio, a shotgun, and

1 when we were, you know, when we were in there, I radioed to  
2 the other guy, hey, we are all in the safe haven.

3 I could hear outside explosions, yelling, chanting,  
4 screaming, gunfire, and I reported all of this on the radio  
5 just saying, this is what my senses are telling me. Then  
6 people started banging on the doors of the building, so I  
7 reported that. Hey, there is banging on the doors. They are  
8 trying to come in, you know, we need immediate assistance.  
9 And there wasn't any response on the radio.

10 Shortly after that, to my recollection, the doors were  
11 blown open. And about 70 individuals, you know, rushed into  
12 the building, all of them carrying AK-47s, grenades, RPGs,  
13 you know, a mixture throughout everyone. Different -- there  
14 were a couple of different assault rifles.

15 And with the number of individuals that came into the  
16 building versus me, I chose just to stay in the shadow that I  
17 was in. So I was partially in the safe haven, partially  
18 outside of the safe haven. The area was, you know, there was  
19 a big shadow where I was sitting, and my view through the  
20 jail cell door was into the common area. So I could see  
21 where everybody was going, and they began breaking  
22 everything. I could just hear glass breaking. I could hear  
23 stuff being thrown around. I could hear furniture being  
24 moved.

25 If I may just back up a little bit. When we made it

1 into the safe haven, I handed my cell phone to the  
2 Ambassador. I said, call everybody on my cell phone. Call  
3 everybody that you know that can help us. At one point, I  
4 handed Sean Smith the shotgun, but just like me and everybody  
5 else that was in the safe haven, we were scared. But as a  
6 security professional with my military training and my agent  
7 training, I'm trained to remain more calm than a non-security  
8 professional.

9 So I took the weapon back from him seeing that he was  
10 visibly shaken. And I just waited to see what was unfolding.  
11 I was on the radio the whole time updating, you know,  
12 whispering. Turned the volume way down, you know, hey guys,  
13 they are in the building. Shortly after that, two  
14 individuals came up to the jail cell door and took out their  
15 AK-47s, and they are beating on the jail cell door. They  
16 also had grenades on them. And I thought they were going to  
17 take the grenades off and put them on the locks and blow the  
18 locks.

19 So I turned to the Ambassador, and said, you know, if  
20 they take their grenades off and put them on the locks, I'm  
21 going to start shooting. And when I go down, pick up the  
22 gun, and keep fighting. Thankfully, they didn't put the  
23 grenades on the locks. And they just kind of turned away,  
24 and walked to a different, you know, part of the house that I  
25 couldn't really see.

1           And then slowly, people started to kind of trickle out.  
2           And then the lights started to kind of dim. My initial  
3           response, or my initial thought was, well, they just knocked  
4           out the generators. You know, we have regular city power,  
5           but we also have backup generators. So flickering would be a  
6           likely, you know, cause of this. But in reality, it was  
7           smoke. And it took me about, you know, 2 or 3 seconds after  
8           that to determine that it was smoke.

9           As soon as I realized it was smoke, I turned to the  
10          Ambassador and Sean Smith and I said, we are moving to the  
11          bathroom. And at that time, grabbed the Ambassador, Sean  
12          Smith was right behind him and we started crawling towards  
13          the bathroom. It's about a 3- to 4-meter crawl. And it only  
14          took seconds for us to reach -- to reach the hallway that the  
15          bathroom was in. But by that time -- seconds later, the  
16          smoke had already filled the entire room and I began  
17          basically army crawling like on my belly, and breathing  
18          through my hands like this, the last, you know, centimeter of  
19          air that was left.

20          And as soon as it became that thick, no light was  
21          visible from the lights that were fully on. The sounds were,  
22          you know, crackling and breaking of things from the heat.  
23          And so to lead them to the bathroom, I was saying, Come on  
24          guys, follow me. And I was slapping my hands on the floor,  
25          or you know, hitting stuff with my hands if I felt anything.

1 Like come on, you guys, follow me. Come on. We are going to  
2 the bathroom.

3 So I make it to the bathroom and nobody follows me in.  
4 The whole time I was slapping and saying, come on, follow me.  
5 My intention of going to the bathroom is because if we made  
6 it to the bathroom, I know there is a window that we can  
7 open. So what we would do is go into the bathroom, close the  
8 door, wet towels on the floor and open the window. And we  
9 could last, you know, probably much longer in the bathroom  
10 than anywhere else in the house.

11 But because nobody followed me in, I wasn't going to  
12 close the door. So thinking about how I can better the  
13 situation, I open the window. And I thought that that could,  
14 you know, provide some, you know, the lights are in the  
15 bathroom. I could provide some light, or I could provide,  
16 you know, someplace with air and they could see that. But by  
17 opening the window, I stood up to open the window, and I  
18 thought my face was on fire. And I opened the window anyway,  
19 and it just became a chimney and all the smoke started, you  
20 know, pouring out of the window and being sucked in my  
21 direction.

22 Because at that point that -- I started to pass out. I  
23 could feel myself becoming weak, and just overcome with smoke  
24 and heat. So I got back on the floor, took off my M4,  
25 because crawling with a slung weapon is extremely difficult.



1 It was getting hung up on things, and I didn't -- I didn't  
2 want to be stuck in that building because of my M4. So I  
3 threw it in the bathroom, just left it there and started  
4 crawling towards my bedroom. And when I decided to do that,  
5 I was very clear to anybody else who could hear me, I'm  
6 moving to my bedroom. Come on, guys, I'm moving to my  
7 bedroom. The whole time I'm hitting the floor, slapping,  
8 yelling. Come on, guys. Come on, you can do it. Let's go.  
9 Let's go. We are moving to my bedroom.

10 So I crawled to my bedroom. And as soon as I passed the  
11 threshold to my bedroom, you know, I had seconds left of  
12 life, essentially. And so I quickly went over to my window  
13 and I started to crank open these metal shutters, but I was  
14 cranking the wrong way. So I had to turn back and crank it  
15 the other way. Then I had to open up a glass window, and  
16 then I had to pull a pin and push out this big metal gate.  
17 And as soon as I did that, I collapsed on to my little patio  
18 area.

19 And around the patio area was, you know, maybe a  
20 2-1/2-foot tall cinderblock wall. And as soon as I went out  
21 there, I just started taking fire immediately. I remember  
22 hearing explosions, which I equate to grenades. I remember  
23 feeling the cement exploding and hitting me in the face. And  
24 I remember the sounds. So after catching my breath, I jumped  
25 back into the building, and I searched for the Ambassador and

1 Sean Smith. I went as far as my threshold, and reached out  
2 into the -- into the area we had just come from to see if I  
3 could feel anybody. But the smoke and heat were so intense  
4 that, I mean, the smoke was coming in through my eyes, even  
5 though they were closed. It was coming in through my nose.  
6 And I stayed in there until I could physically couldn't do it  
7 anymore.

8 When I was in the Navy, they engrain in you,  
9 110 percent. And most people don't think you can do  
10 110 percent, but it's part of my character. I do 110 percent  
11 and I stayed in there until -- until I physically could not  
12 and mentally could not stay in there any longer.

13 I went back out of the building, caught my breath on the  
14 patio again, immediately taking rounds, the same stuff,  
15 whizzing, you know, jumped back into the building, and I had  
16 intentions -- you know, I was just thinking of any way that I  
17 could possibly signal them or let them know where I was  
18 besides yelling and slapping and hitting stuff.

19 And I remembered that I had a lamp in my room, and I  
20 went over to my lamp and I turned on my lamp, thinking that  
21 they could see it in the smoke. But it didn't turn on. And  
22 so I held it up to my eye to see if it was working, and I  
23 remember seeing a very faint glow when it was this close. I  
24 remember feeling the heat of the lamp, and I could just  
25 barely see the actual light from it.

1           That's how thick the smoke was. And I went back to my  
2   threshold, searched around, still yelling, still saying, Come  
3   on guys, you know, to my bedroom. No response. Nothing. I  
4   went back out and caught my breath again, still taking  
5   rounds. And I went back in one or two more times to try and  
6   find them, and I couldn't. The last time I went out, you  
7   know, I decided that if I went back into the building that I  
8   wasn't going to come back out. The smoke and heat were way  
9   too powerful, and way too strong, and it was extremely  
10   confusing feeling my way in a smoke-filled building. And I  
11   didn't want to get lost, and so I decided to climb up the  
12   ladder up to the roof.

13          I climbed up the ladder, and pulled up the ladder behind  
14   me and that's the moment that I knew that Ambassador Stevens  
15   and Sean Smith were probably dead. Immediately, upon getting  
16   up to the roof, I started radioing for my colleagues, you  
17   know, telling them the situation, you know, telling them my  
18   situation, you know, I am exhausted. I am completely  
19   exhausted. I gave everything I had. And I'm still thinking  
20   of ways to help, still thinking of ways to get the guys out.

21          So I remember that we have a skylight in the top of the  
22   building, and so I, you know, we had a little stash of gear  
23   up on the roof. So I went over and I grabbed an M4 magazine  
24   and I climbed up on to this little platform which is near the  
25   window, and with the butt of the magazine, I started hitting

1 the window. But it's protected by these metal bars. And I  
2 couldn't break the window. But I remember yelling and  
3 hitting it as hard as I possibly could.

4 The bad guys saw me up there, started shooting at me  
5 again. I remember seeing tracer fire right over my head. I  
6 remember hearing the whizzing of the rounds going past me.  
7 And so I climbed, you know, back down off the ledge and just  
8 got on the radio. Hey, guys, I'm on a frying pan. This  
9 thing is hot. The smoke is coming out of the building and  
10 going right on to the roof. If I pick my head up I'm getting  
11 shot at, and I can't -- I can't do this forever.

12 Finally, over the radio, [REDACTED] says, [REDACTED], we are  
13 coming to get you. You know, at that time a couple of  
14 seconds were gone, and he was like, hang on. Hang on. We  
15 are coming to get you. I don't know how long I was up on the  
16 roof, but for me it was a while.

17 Finally, the other guys came over in a fully-armored  
18 vehicle and parked right at the base of kind of my location  
19 and set up a small perimeter, called me down off the roof. I  
20 climbed down and they were all amazed to see me still alive.  
21 Just my condition was, you know, my face was black. My  
22 eyeballs were black. My nose was black. Everything I had  
23 was black. But as a security professional, I said, give me a  
24 gun. [REDACTED] gave me a 9-millimeter pistol which I was  
25 a little unhappy about, but I took it anyway and stood --

1 stood a position on the outside.

2 And [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED] tried to go inside the building  
3 and find them, but shortly after that, their report was way  
4 too hot, way too smokey. You know, we are going to get lost  
5 in there. Somebody is going to die if we keep this up.

6 It's hard to remember a couple of the next parts are --  
7 like their order. But at one point we went over to -- I  
8 think then the GRS showed up and basically beefed up our --  
9 beefed up our security, you know, just one guy gave me an  
10 [REDACTED], which I was very happy to take. And you know, I set  
11 up, took a position, and you know, just waited in and  
12 supported these guys while they went in the building, and  
13 finally somebody took a rope and they brought it in the  
14 building, you know, so people wouldn't get lost. And [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED] found Sean Smith and pulled him out, and he was already  
16 dead.

17 Then the idea came that, you know, let's try gas masks.  
18 So I was in the vehicle and we went over to the TOC, got some  
19 gas masks, drove the vehicle back over to where we were.  
20 People tried gas masks, but that didn't work. You know, so I  
21 just, I mean, I just held perimeter as much as I could.

22 Then at one point [REDACTED] came back over with us. Somehow  
23 I don't remember exactly how he made it over, but he was  
24 there with us, and we loaded up in the car, because we  
25 started hearing some fire, some people firing weapons. And I

1       need to back up just a little bit.

2               Shortly after, or well, at one point right when the GRS  
3       showed up, a bunch of 17th February Martyrs Brigade showed  
4       up, and I saw one of our QRF guys with them. And I remember  
5       looking at him and basically cursing at him and saying, where  
6       were you? You know, he looked at me, and he looked white as  
7       a ghost. So then, yeah, so there was this firefight that  
8       began. Right away, 17 Feb took off. I don't know where they  
9       went and we were left. It was the agents and GRS. We had  
10       Sean Smith. We loaded Sean Smith up in the car and the  
11       agreement was, you guys got to get out of here. You just,  
12       you know, you just survived through hell. Get out of here.  
13       We are right behind you. We load up the cars, and some guys  
14       were like, oh, you know, we should stay and, you know, and do  
15       this, but the decision was made, we are getting in the cars  
16       and we are getting out.

17              I get in the driver's seat of our fully-armored vehicle,  
18       and I drive out of the building, or out of the compound.  
19       Immediately, I turn left. We are told -- I don't remember  
20       how this part actually goes. I just can't recall for some  
21       reason. Somebody -- I think it was a guard that we had, or  
22       somebody said, you know, don't go this way. You know,  
23       there's a mob coming or there's something, some kind of  
24       danger. Turn around and go the other way.

25              So I turn the vehicle around and when I do that, we

1 start driving down the road and I can see a roadblock at the  
2 end of the road. And I can see a bunch of people gathered  
3 around on the side of the road and in the middle of the road.  
4 And so, well, I perceive that to be a threat, so I turn  
5 around and went the other way. The guard, you know, the  
6 guard came back and was like, do not go this way. You know,  
7 turn around and go the other way. Obviously, I trusted his  
8 judgment because I turned around once more, and started  
9 driving down the road towards, you know, this group of  
10 people.

11 As we approached them, you know, my estimate is there  
12 were approximately 30 people on the left, 70 on the right.  
13 They started waving us into this compound. And my thought  
14 process was about 2 seconds long. I took my foot off the gas  
15 and I was like, we are not going in. I hit the gas, and as  
16 soon as I hit the gas, they raised up with their weapons, and  
17 just unloaded on the car. I remember hearing an explosion,  
18 you know, near the back of the vehicle. But we got hit so  
19 many times, you know, this is a fully-armored vehicle and we  
20 got hit so many times.

21 I remember believing that the rounds were coming  
22 through, and so I was yelling, you know, get down. Get down.  
23 Get down. And the guys in the back are, you know, ducking  
24 their heads. [REDACTED] up in the front, you know, he is  
25 getting down. And I'm, you know, I'm just driving as fast as

1 I can to get out of there. At the end of the road there is  
2 two vehicles blocking a portion of the road. There is also a  
3 wooden sawhorse, and just a mob of people. But my job is to  
4 get us out, to get us to safety. So I don't let off the gas,  
5 and I just go right through, you know, ram whatever I have to  
6 ram just get out.

7 So I turn the corner and immediately there is loads of  
8 traffic. I mean, it is backed up forever. One of the agents  
9 says slow down, you know. Let's try to blend in. Well, we  
10 have been under a lot of stress, and one can imagine that he  
11 is just trying to help out. And he is a good guy.

12 So I slow down for a second. And as soon as I slow  
13 down, you know, somebody comes over, starts yelling and  
14 pointing at the vehicle. And so I immediately hit the gas,  
15 put a tire on each side of the median, and just floor it.  
16 And there is signs down the middle of the median, and I'm  
17 just taking out these signs left and right.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. I guess you didn't blend in at that  
19 point.

20 Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't think I ever blended in in  
21 Benghazi, ever, sir. There was a vehicle that I thought was  
22 trying to ram us from the left-hand side. You know, so I  
23 kind of dodged that a little bit. But you know, it didn't  
24 hit us, and I don't know what it was. But then we were  
25 coming up to a T-intersection and, you know, I didn't let off



1 the gas. And I just -- I don't know how it happened, but  
2 somehow I negotiated through the traffic, you know, skidded  
3 sideways right through the traffic. And just kept on going,  
4 just started navigating through all of the cars, and  
5 obstacles.

6 Finally, we were able to turn, kind of get off the main  
7 road there where it was a lot quieter, and then we made our  
8 way to the Annex. Upon arrival at the Annex, you know, we  
9 pulled in, and immediately people came out and I parked the  
10 car, got out of the car, and you know, their eyeballs were  
11 about the size of saucers, just seeing the car, and seeing  
12 us. And immediately, they brought me into kind of a, you  
13 know, the kitchen area, which is where the med area was. And  
14 they just started pumping me, you know, with fluids, just  
15 chugging water, eating fruit, and my goal was just to get  
16 back up on my feet, get back out and keep fighting.

17 And my impression of what all the other guys did was,  
18 you know, they came in, made sure they had enough ammo, made  
19 sure they had something to eat, and they went back up on the  
20 roof, as was asked by the GRS, to beef up security over  
21 there. I couldn't sit long on the gurney. I'm a security  
22 guy. I'm a military guy, and I have to be part of the  
23 solution. So I get up, and they say, you know, [REDACTED] we  
24 want you to do a quick debrief of what happened. Sure.

25 So I go give a quick debrief. And then basically they,

1 you know, after the debrief, I was so drained of energy, you  
2 know, I said, I'm going to need some time. So I put my, you  
3 know, I put my weapon down and one of the Annex folks  
4 basically put me on the couch and she said, just take a  
5 breather. Take a second.

6 You know, there weren't too many active firefights going  
7 on at the time, but that is probably my most guilty part of  
8 the entire night was I fell asleep for about 10 minutes on  
9 the couch. And I feel guilty about it because 110 percent,  
10 and I definitely, you know, looking back, I gave 110 percent.  
11 And if one of my colleagues fell asleep for 10 minutes, I  
12 would never, ever, ever fault them or anything, but, you  
13 know, it was tough.

14 So I get up, and basically I say, you know, give me a  
15 weapon. I'm back in the fight. I get up. I get an M4. I  
16 can, you know, I can barely stand, but I can still think. I  
17 can still, you know, I can still fight. And I go sit by the  
18 main door of the Annex building that we were in. So I could  
19 see the main gate, in case anybody came over the main gate.  
20 And I stayed there for a while. And I went from that  
21 position to the cameras, and I was also talking with [REDACTED]

22 [REDACTED] I was talking [REDACTED]

23 And, but mainly, I stood there, I mean, I sat there and  
24 just waited, you know. Shortly after that, we had a few  
25 firefights. I wasn't involved in those because my position

1     only looked at the main gate. And I wasn't aware of who was  
2     on which building, or who was firing. But I mean, there was  
3     a lot. There was a lot going on. At one point they came to  
4     me and they said, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] So  
5     basically in-between two firefights, I ran over, grabbed a  
6     phone, called, left a message, called again and said, you  
7     know, you are going to see some -- you are going to see some  
8     stuff on the news, but just know that I'm alive and I'm  
9     coming home.

10     After that, I took on my same post, and just waited. So  
11     after, you know, a few firefights, I can't remember how many,  
12     you know, we were fighting a long time. We had some  
13     additional folks show up at the Annex and kind of beef up  
14     security. One of them happened to be a medic. He came over  
15     and checked me out. Yeah, then there was some more, you  
16     know, there were more firefights going on, and then the  
17     mortars came in. And you know, I didn't know they were  
18     mortars at the time. All I heard were explosions. And one  
19     of the explosions hit the building that I was in and I  
20     remember hearing stuff, you know, stuff breaking in the  
21     building.

22     So I went to go check it out and it was part of a  
23     ceiling had come down, and it wasn't until later until I  
24     realized that, I mean, that shot was, you know, was a deadly  
25     shot. And there were a couple more mortars that came in.

1           And then I didn't hear any more firing, I didn't hear  
2 any talking. And then they brought [REDACTED] into the  
3 building. They also brought [REDACTED] in, and, you know,  
4 part of my job in the military as you know, combat search and  
5 rescue, when you rescue somebody, you know, you can do the  
6 whole med stuff afterwards. We can stabilize them until we  
7 get them back to a proper location.

8           And so I went to work right away with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
9 [REDACTED]. And we worked really hard on him and I have to tell  
10 you, you know, to be doing tourniquets, and to be comforting  
11 somebody, and that somebody is, you know, your really good  
12 friend and your colleague, it is pretty hard to do. But you  
13 know, it had to be done. And we did it. And I also went  
14 over to [REDACTED] and I worked with [REDACTED] on [REDACTED]  
15 [REDACTED]. His injuries were pretty bad, but they weren't as bad  
16 as [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] so, you know, after -- I worked on  
17 them for a long time. I was also watching the cameras to see  
18 what was popping up, if more stuff was coming.

19           Eventually, you know, I wasn't any part of the  
20 negotiations or determination on how we were getting out of  
21 there. But eventually it was, you know, it began to get  
22 light outside and we started preparing ourselves for an  
23 evacuation. You know, so we lined up all of these cars. And  
24 they started asking for volunteers, and they said, who wants  
25 to drive? And me being the guy who wants to help, I was like

1 I will. And they were like, does anybody else want to drive?

2 So I got -- so eventually they let me drive. So I get  
3 in a car, and I try to put [REDACTED] in the back, [REDACTED]  
4 [REDACTED]. So they end up putting  
5 him in a different vehicle. And nobody gets in my vehicle.  
6 So I get out, and I go get in a, you know, a fully-armored  
7 vehicle, and we take off and ride to the airport.

8 BY MS. SAWYER:

9 Q Okay. Thank you. That was very helpful. I have a  
10 few questions. And then I think, you know, perhaps somewhat  
11 unorthodox, to the extent that you also have questions about  
12 this ground, probably, we can cover them now, and then -- but  
13 first, if you wanted to take a break, we would be happy to do  
14 it. Get some water. It's up to you.

15 A I'm okay.

16 Q All right. When you were explaining to us kind of  
17 what you had done when you first heard, it sounded like you  
18 were with Mr. [REDACTED] and Mr. [REDACTED]. What was your  
19 recollection of where Mr. [REDACTED] was? Was he over in the  
20 TOC? That's what our understanding is.

21 A I believe he was in the TOC, yes.

22 Q And when you were communicating, you said you had  
23 your radio on. And you were certainly communicating  
24 continuously.

25 A Yes, ma'am.

1 Q Did you ever hear responses? Had you turned it  
2 down too low to hear responses, or --

3 A No, I could hear people talking on the radio, but  
4 it wasn't to me.

5 Q And do you recall overhearing any of that  
6 conversation in particular? Did any of it involve the plans  
7 for having assistance come to you or to come to the mission?

8 A No. I say that as no, I do not recall.

9 Q At the point at which you had -- and thank you for  
10 walking us through, you know, the efforts and what had  
11 unfolded -- at the point at which you had left the building  
12 and your colleagues who were on the mission had joined you,  
13 you indicated that Mr. [REDACTED] had handed you a 9-millimeter  
14 pistol. At that point in time, to the extent you can  
15 remember, was there still active gunfire? Was there a lull  
16 in the active gunfire at any point?

17 A Yes. There was a lull in the action.

18 Q Do you recall whether or not when you had then  
19 taken up kind of a perimeter position, whether you were in a  
20 place where you needed to discharge the weapon, either the  
21 weapon that Mr. [REDACTED] had given you, and then I think you  
22 said that the GRS appeared. Did they appear during this lull  
23 in the active gunfire?

24 A Yes, I mean, the lull was -- I lost all sense of  
25 time, really, to be honest. But the lull, to me, was quite a

1 while. And sometime in there the GRS showed up, I mean.

2 Q Okay, and did you have a need either with the  
3 9-millimeter, or you said one of the GRS gave you [REDACTED] --

4 A Uh-huh.

5 Q -- to have to discharge either of those two  
6 weapons?

7 A No, ma'am.

8 Q At the point at which the firefighting, you said  
9 then sometime after the GRS got there, that there was  
10 reengagement with gunfire. At that point, had you already --  
11 you said you then -- in a remarkable feat of driving, quite  
12 frankly, with the person who drove the car, and even with the  
13 backseat driver in that situation trying to help you out --  
14 had you already -- at the time that gunfire reengaged, were  
15 you already in the process of just you remember where you  
16 kind of were in the positioning?

17 A I remember us already preparing to leave. I was  
18 already sitting in the driver's seat.

19 Q And then after you had gotten to the Annex, you had  
20 indicated, I think at the very end, that, you know, at a  
21 point after the attack with the mortars, there was an effort  
22 to pack up and leave. And I think at that point, and just so  
23 we don't have to walk through, you had said you hadn't been  
24 part of the discussion about the evacuation. Was that just  
25 true through the course of the evening, that you were not

1 involved in those particular conversations about would there  
2 be an evacuation of the Annex and when that might occur?

3 A So many things were going on that, you know, I was  
4 part of conversations, but nothing sticks out where I could,  
5 you know, specifically say that I was, you know, part of that  
6 decision, or anything.

7 Q And then when you provided the debrief after you  
8 all had come from the mission to the Annex, do you remember  
9 who you provided that to? Was that someone in Benghazi, or  
10 did they ask you to talk with someone in Tripoli, or in  
11 Washington?

12 A No, it was somebody in Benghazi.

13 Q And what was the purpose of that debrief?

14 A I guess I'm not really sure. Yeah.

15 Q Did you talk mostly about what had happened at the  
16 mission, or the environment driving from the mission to the  
17 Annex? I mean, one reason -- I have no idea. It could be  
18 that they were trying to figure out what you had encountered  
19 to the mission -- from the mission to the Annex. But just to  
20 the best of your recollection.

21 A No, it was -- it was a debrief on, you know,  
22 basically start to finish up until the Annex arrival.

23 Q And do you remember -- I probably already asked  
24 this. I apologize.

25 A That's okay.



1 Q Do you remember who you gave that debrief to?

2 A I do. But I can't remember -- I can't recall his  
3 name.

4 Q Do you know if it was the [REDACTED]?

5 A It was not the [REDACTED].

6 Q [REDACTED]

7 A [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

8 Q Okay. And then, you know, once you all evacuated  
9 to the airport, and you know, I think you have understated a  
10 bit the medical challenges you were encountering because it  
11 is my understanding you were treated and treated for a period  
12 of time for smoke inhalation, among other things. But do you  
13 recall, with regard to the actual evacuation from Benghazi to  
14 Tripoli, any of the details of who was on the plane with you?  
15 Do you recall there being anyone other than -- anyone who you  
16 didn't recognize as part of either your mission team or  
17 people you had seen at the Annex?

18 A There were people on the plane who I didn't -- I  
19 didn't really recognize. And I obviously didn't work with  
20 everybody at the Annex, so it's quite possible.

21 Ms. Sawyer. Did you guys have follow-up?

22 Ms. Jackson. Yes.

23 Ms. Sawyer. Why don't you go ahead.

24 BY MS. JACKSON:

25 Q Going back to this debrief that you had that

1 occurred after you -- or shortly after you arrived at the  
2 Annex, is that correct?

3 A Yes.

4 Q And was it just one person that you gave the  
5 debrief to?

6 A Primarily, yes.

7 Q Okay. And were you the only DS agent who was there  
8 at the time?

9 A [REDACTED] was near, but you know, I don't  
10 think he was listening to what I was saying.

11 Q Okay.

12 A And if it helps, I -- I did just have kind of a jar  
13 of memory. I do remember his call sign, if that helps.

14 Q Okay, yeah.

15 A [REDACTED]

16 Q [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

18 Mr. Westmoreland. [REDACTED]

19 Ms. Jackson. [REDACTED]

20 BY MS. JACKSON:

21 Q Do you recall whether that person or anyone else  
22 from the Annex asked similar questions to the other DS  
23 agents, [REDACTED]?

24 A I don't know.

25 Q Okay, you didn't witness that?

1 A No.

2 Q When you were leaving the compound, and you said  
3 when you pulled out you turned left, then turned right, well,  
4 at some point, somebody was waving you off --

5 A Right.

6 Q -- from that direction. And you described the  
7 person as a guard.

8 A I'm unfamiliar with who it exactly was. I would  
9 have to review, you know, some documents to refamiliarize  
10 myself.

11 Q Was it someone that you recognized?

12 A I believe so. Otherwise I would not have listened  
13 to them --

14 Q So --

15 A -- or considered it.

16 Q Your best recollection, it was perhaps a member of  
17 the Blue Mountain Group or the QRF, or someone that in your  
18 short time in Benghazi you were familiar with?

19 A Yes.

20 Q It was a trusted, or somewhat trusted person?

21 A Yes.

22 Q Okay. At any point that evening, did any of the  
23 GRS members from the Annex tell you anything about a delay in  
24 their arriving at the compound?

25 A No.

1 Q Did you ever have a subsequent conversation with  
2 any of the GRS individuals about a delay in their getting to  
3 the compound?

4 A No.

5 Q When you evacuated from Benghazi to Tripoli, you  
6 said that there were some individuals on the plane that you  
7 did not recognize or know, is that correct?

8 A Yes.

9 Q Okay. [REDACTED]  
10 [REDACTED]  
11 [REDACTED]

12 A I mean, I guess there is really one guy that I can  
13 really think of. And the only reason I can remember not  
14 knowing who he was originally and then realizing that I  
15 didn't know him was because he had an ND on the aircraft.

16 Q He had a what on the aircraft?

17 A Negligent discharge. And he was part of the Annex  
18 team, because I'm familiar with everybody who is on my team.  
19 And then I became familiar with who he was after that.

20 Q Did you ever learn that there were any other State  
21 Department, either personnel or State Department contractors  
22 that were on the plane from Benghazi to Tripoli?

23 A Not that I recall.

24 Q When you were in Tripoli, did you talk with anyone  
25 about the events that transpired to the DCM? To [REDACTED]

1 [REDACTED]? Any Tripoli personnel? To the [REDACTED]?

2 A I don't recall doing that, no.

3 Q Do you recall whether any of the other agents had  
4 sort of a quick debrief or anything while you were in  
5 Tripoli?

6 A I don't know.

7 Q Okay. How about once you arrived in Germany?

8 A Yes, I met with the Federal Bureau of  
9 Investigation, and also the Diplomatic Security Service.

10 Q Was that a joint interview or separate interview?

11 A It was a joint interview.

12 Q Okay, do you recall whether there was any Justice,  
13 you know, lawyer there?

14 A There was.

15 Q So there were three people conducting the -- or  
16 present for the interview?

17 A I believe there were four people.

18 Q Would it have been two FBI?

19 A Two FBI, one DS, and one State rep.

20 Q And who was the DS agent or personnel that was  
21 there?

22 A I only remember him by his nickname which was

23 [REDACTED]

24 Q [REDACTED] Hopefully that is rather unique in DS.

25 A [REDACTED] is his last name.

1 Q [REDACTED]

2 A Yes. Yes.

3 Q At any time while you were in Germany, did you meet  
4 General Carter Ham?

5 A I did.

6 Q What can you tell us about that conversation?

7 A He was walking around the hospital basically  
8 stopping by everybody's room. And he came into my room and  
9 gave me a coin, shook my hand. And I'm sure it was some kind  
10 of words of encouragement.

11 Q Had you met him on one of the buses transporting  
12 you from the airport to the hospital?

13 A I don't recall.

14 Q You were asked earlier if you had been -- I'm  
15 moving on. Is that okay? Or do you have any more follow-up  
16 as to the -- I was going to ask about other post-incident  
17 statements.

18 Ms. Sawyer. Well, why don't we, for the sake of --

19 Ms. Jackson. Three more minutes and then I'm done.

20 Ms. Sawyer. Then I say carry on.

21 BY MS. JACKSON:

22 Q You were interviewed by the Accountability Review  
23 Board, is that correct?

24 A Yes, I was.

25 Q [REDACTED]

1 Was that interview conducted with you alone?

2 A You mean, more specifically, there were a lot of  
3 people in the room. I was the only special agent there.

4 Q You were the only one answering questions?

5 A Yes.

6 Q Okay. Were you interviewed by the Best Practices  
7 Panel?

8 A No. I don't believe so.

9 Q When you were interviewed by the ARB, do you recall  
10 whether that -- how many people were there?

11 A No. Approximately 15.

12 Q Do you recall if there was anybody there from the  
13 FBI or Justice Department?

14 A I believe so, yes.

15 Q Okay.

16 A I can't be certain, but --

17 Q Other than the ARB and the interview that was  
18 conducted in Germany, have you participated in any other  
19 questioning, statements, things like that, debriefings?

20 A I met with the FBI just over the years  
21 periodically. I have also worked with diplomatic security on  
22 a few -- with [REDACTED], and -- then also in Germany, in my  
23 hospital room, you know, I don't know exactly who he is  
24 today, but he said he was a chaplain and he asked about the  
25 situation and what happened. I was told by the FBI he might

1 not have been a chaplain.

2 Q Did he have a particular nationality? Was it just  
3 European?

4 A I mean, he was dressed in United States military --  
5 in a United States military uniform. I don't even remember  
6 what branch, and I'm familiar with the branches, so my memory  
7 is not very good.

8 Ms. Jackson. Congressman?

9 Mr. Westmoreland. Just for the record, [REDACTED].

10 Is that [REDACTED]? Does he go by the call sign [REDACTED]?

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, he does, sir.

12 Mr. Westmoreland. And do you know what direction the  
13 other vehicle went in when it left the compound?

14 Mr. [REDACTED]. No.

15 Mr. Westmoreland. Do you know if it took the same route  
16 that you did?

17 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, sir. I don't know.

18 Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. While you all were in Germany,  
19 did any of the boys get together just to share stories or  
20 were you all pretty much isolated in this stuff?

21 Mr. [REDACTED]. We were all kind of in the same hotel and  
22 [REDACTED] I got together and, you know, it was just  
23 basically talk. I also met with GRS guys once or twice.

24 Mr. Westmoreland. Did you ever talk to [REDACTED]?

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes, sir.



1           Mr. Westmoreland. Did he ever share anything with you  
2 about what happened before they left the Annex?

3           Ms. Safai. At what point when they left the Annex? At  
4 what point?

5           Mr. Westmoreland. Before they left the Annex. What  
6 went on before they left the Annex to come over to the  
7 compound.

8           Mr. [REDACTED]. We might have talked about it, sir, but I  
9 wouldn't -- I wouldn't feel comfortable, you know, describing  
10 anything, because I can't remember exactly.

11          Mr. Westmoreland. Well, there is a couple points that  
12 he really kind of outlines or tries to make, and I didn't  
13 know if he shared those with you about a delay in coming over  
14 there, or any specific orders he had been given to stand  
15 down, stand up, go, sit down and shut up, you know. Any of  
16 those things that he may have shared with you in their effort  
17 to get to you?

18          Mr. [REDACTED]. I don't recall him ever saying that  
19 specifically to me about a delay of any sort.

20          Mr. Westmoreland. Okay. Just wondered.

21          Ms. Jackson. I think that's it for us.

22          Ms. Sawyer. Okay.

23          Mr. [REDACTED]. Do you mind if we take a little break?

24          Ms. Jackson. No, that's great.

25          [Recess.]

1

2

BY MS. SAWYER:

3

Q Just a couple of quick follow-up questions for you.

4

You know, one of the things that I had said earlier I hoped

5

we might get an opportunity to talk about were some of the

6

success stories. One of the things that did come up during

7

the last hour was just some of the work that you had done to

8

provide some medical assistance for some of your colleagues.

9

And I had a recollection that you had also sought during your

10

time in Benghazi to help provide for some of your colleagues

11

some medical training. Did you recall that at all or just

12

some refreshers on some basics?

13

A One of my original assignments from the RSO was

14

also, like, the med portion, and yes.

15

Q And it sounds like both you and at least one of

16

your other colleagues -- I think it was your colleague who

17

came from Tripoli with the Ambassador and Mr. [REDACTED] --

18

were pretty critical in helping provide some very much needed

19

assistance, at least for Mr. [REDACTED]?

20

A It was [REDACTED] and I who worked on [REDACTED], and

21

[REDACTED] and I who worked on [REDACTED].

22

Q And both of those individuals would have been on

23

that first flight that you also were on because you also had

24

some medical issues that needed attending. Is that correct?

25

A That is correct.

1           Q    And you had indicated that there was an  
2   unfortunate, I think the term is negligent discharge of a  
3   service weapon, I presume by someone that you later found out  
4   was from the Annex. To what extent, if any, did that delay  
5   the leaving of the plane?

6           A    I don't really think that it delayed the leaving of  
7   the plane. What it did was prompt me to collect everybody's  
8   weapon and clear them myself. And then I also explained to  
9   the flight attendant, who was sent back by the pilot to find  
10   out what happened, and basically I told her that we just  
11   dropped something and let's go. I mean, so the delay, maybe  
12   seconds.

13          Q    Thank you for collecting the weapons that were  
14   remaining on the flight.

15          You had indicated back when you, just briefly, when you  
16   were evacuating the mission to go to the Annex, and you  
17   explained that you initially took a left and then a right,  
18   and then there had been someone standing outside a house  
19   along your road waving you in. Prior to that night, do you  
20   recall whether you had been briefed in particular about the  
21   house at which those individuals were located?

22          A    It was actually me who brought up the other  
23   compound that was down the street from us. This is what  
24   you're referring to, correct?

25          Q    When you say the other compound, tell me what you

1 mean by the other compound down the street?

2 A Where the 70 individuals were --

3 Q Yes.

4 A Okay. Yes.

5 Q Yes, you raised that and you said that there were a  
6 number of individuals outside a compound. Had you been  
7 briefed about that compound prior to that evening?

8 A Well, what I was trying to say was I brought the  
9 idea up to my team previously, prior to that night, and we  
10 reported it [REDACTED]. But I don't recall receiving  
11 any follow-on information regarding that location.

12 Q Okay. And what had been your concern about that  
13 location?

14 A Sometimes the gate was left open and I could see  
15 inside of that compound, and usually when we drove by there  
16 were several male individuals walking around the interior of  
17 the compound. Some were dressed in military garb. And to  
18 me, that's suspicious, so I reported it.

19 Q And do you recall roughly when you reported that?  
20 And by roughly, I mean was it a week before the attacks? Was  
21 it shortly after you had arrived, which would have put it  
22 about a month before the attacks?

23 A I apologize. I cannot recall.

24 Q And you said that there was no follow-on to that  
25 reporting that you did. And just to be clear, you had

1 reported it to [REDACTED]?

2 A Yes.

3 Q Do you recall who you reported it to there?

4 A No.

5 Q And then when you say there was no follow-on, just  
6 to translate that and make sure I'm understanding that  
7 accurately, when you say there was no follow-on, they did not  
8 come back to you with any information about the compound?

9 A Not that I recall. Not that I recall, yeah.

10 Q Do you recall whether they indicated to you that  
11 they were going to investigate it? Was there a request for  
12 them to investigate it?

13 A I don't recall.

14 Q In terms of what you had observed and then had  
15 suspicions and then just reported it [REDACTED], was  
16 there anything about the activity there that concerned you in  
17 terms of a potential targeting of you all at the mission?

18 A Nothing specific that led me to believe that this  
19 group of male individuals with military garb were targeting  
20 us. My concern was rather that their presence was there.

21 Q So we talked a little bit about the fact that you  
22 provided an interview for the Accountability Review Board. I  
23 know that you've at least read portions of that report. One  
24 of the things we have certainly asked, the Members have asked  
25 of family members who met with them was really, from their

1 perspective, you know, this is now the eighth congressional  
2 investigation, 2-1/2 years later, we are committed to making  
3 sure that it is the last. So just in general, from your  
4 perspective as we sit here today, is there from your  
5 perspective things that we need to look into that still need  
6 to be investigated?

7 A No.

8 Q And I'm going to ask you, you know, to that end,  
9 and we certainly appreciate you coming today to share with us  
10 your firsthand experience, there have, though, over the 2-1/2  
11 years since the attack been a number of allegations that have  
12 been raised on a number of different topics. Some of those  
13 topics will touch on things that would be within your realm  
14 of experience. Some of them may not. We are asking these  
15 questions in part to try to put to rest allegations that keep  
16 coming up.

17 So I'm going to go through a set of questions for you  
18 and just ask you to share with the committee whether or not  
19 you have any firsthand evidence or knowledge about any of  
20 these allegations.

21 It has been alleged that Secretary of State Clinton  
22 intentionally blocked military action on the night of the  
23 attacks. One Congressman has speculated that, quote,  
24 "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta to stand down," end  
25 quote, and this resulted in the Defense Department not

1 sending more assets to help in Benghazi.

2 Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton  
3 ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down"  
4 on the night of the attacks?

5 A No.

6 Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State  
7 Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense  
8 Panetta on the night of the attacks?

9 A No.

10 Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
11 personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to  
12 Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim  
13 and gave it, quote, "four Pinocchios," its highest award for  
14 false claims, yet these allegations have persisted  
15 nonetheless.

16 Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
17 personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security  
18 resources to Libya?

19 A No.

20 Q Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was  
21 personally involved in providing specific instruction on  
22 day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

23 A No.

24 Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
25 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed

1 by General Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner  
2 support for military operations in Libya in spring of 2011.

3 Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
4 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risks posed  
5 by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for  
6 military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

7 A No.

8 Q It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in  
9 Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to  
10 other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House  
11 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote,  
12 "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to  
13 Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support  
14 for this allegation," end quote.

15 Do you have any evidence to contradict the House  
16 Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the  
17 CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

18 A No.

19 Q Do you have any evidence that the U.S. facilities  
20 in Benghazi were being used to facilitate weapons transfers  
21 from Libya to Syria or to any other foreign country?

22 A No.

23 Q A team of CIA security personal was temporarily  
24 delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special  
25 Mission Compound, and there have been a number of allegations



1 about the cause of and the appropriateness of that delay.

2 The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan report  
3 concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote, "stand  
4 down," end quote, but that instead there were tactical  
5 disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

6 Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House  
7 Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand down  
8 order to CIA personnel?

9 A No.

10 Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the  
11 decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right  
12 decision, do you have any evidence that there was a bad or  
13 improper reason behind the temporary delay of the CIA  
14 security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the  
15 Special Mission Compound?

16 A No.

17 Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in  
18 the course of producing documents to the Accountability  
19 Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or  
20 scrubbed out of that production.

21 Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
22 Department removed or scrubbed damaging documents from the  
23 materials that were provided to the ARB?

24 A No.

25 Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State

1 Department directed anyone else at the State Department to  
2 remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that  
3 were provided to the ARB?

4 A No.

5 Q Let me ask these questions also for documents that  
6 were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that  
7 anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging  
8 documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

9 A No.

10 Q It has been alleged that CIA Deputy Director  
11 Michael Morell altered unclassified talking points about the  
12 Benghazi attacks for political reasons and that he then  
13 misrepresented his actions when he told Congress that the  
14 CIA, quote, "faithfully performed our duties in accordance  
15 with the highest standards of objectivity and  
16 nonpartisanship," end quote.

17 Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike  
18 Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to  
19 Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

20 A No.

21 Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director  
22 Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for  
23 political reasons?

24 A No.

25 Q It has been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice

1 made, quote, "intentional misrepresentation" when she spoke  
2 on the Sunday talk shows about the Benghazi attacks.

3 Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice  
4 intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks  
5 on the Sunday talk shows?

6 A No.

7 Q It has been alleged that the President of the  
8 United States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in  
9 Chief," end quote, on the night of the attacks," and that he  
10 was, quote, "missing in action," end quote.

11 Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that  
12 the President was virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief or  
13 missing in action on the night of the attacks?

14 A No.

15 Q It has been alleged that a team of four military  
16 personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who  
17 were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were  
18 ordered by their superiors to, quote, "stand down," meaning  
19 to cease all operations. Military officials have stated that  
20 those four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "to  
21 remain in place," end quote, in Tripoli to provide security  
22 and medical assistance in their current location. A  
23 Republican staff report issued by the House Armed Services  
24 Committee found that, quote, "There was no stand down order  
25 issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli who sought to

1 join the fight in Benghazi."

2 Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of  
3 the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "There was no  
4 stand down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli  
5 who sought to join the fight in Benghazi"?

6 A No.

7 Q It has been alleged that the military failed to  
8 deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have  
9 saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman Howard  
10 "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed  
11 Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks after  
12 which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how  
13 quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it  
14 dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did,"  
15 end quote.

16 Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman  
17 McKeon's conclusion?

18 A No.

19 Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had  
20 military assets available to them on the night of the attacks  
21 that could have saved lives, but that the Pentagon leadership  
22 intentionally decided not to deploy?

23 A No.

24 Q With that, I think we're finished. Again, Mr.

25 [REDACTED], we thank you very much for coming and volunteering

1 to speak to the committee. You know, I think you heard  
2 certainly from members on both side of the aisle how grateful  
3 we all are for your service, your continued service to the  
4 country.

5 And I'll certainly with that just ask one last  
6 open-ended question. In the course of the day you've spoken  
7 about a number of topics. Is there anything that you feel  
8 you would like to amplify or clarify for the record before we  
9 finish?

10 A Something that I just want to bring is that I think  
11 it is really important for agencies to take care of their  
12 people, especially following incidents such as this incident.  
13 And I'm really interested in taking care of or helping out  
14 other agents who go through similar situations or maybe not  
15 even other situations that are not as tragic as mine. And so  
16 I guess I just want to say that because it is important to  
17 me, I'm taking strides to bring up conversations to help when  
18 we don't necessarily have things on paper.

19 You know, the agents coming out of Benghazi, including  
20 myself, went through a lot, and there were just some things  
21 that, you know, as employees you would expect your agency to  
22 do to help with reintegration back into your agency and  
23 getting back to work. And I really hope that, you know, that  
24 the State Department can establish a program or actually  
25 expound upon what we already have in place so that we can

1 help the other agents when this does happen again. That's  
2 all.

3 Q And to the extent you're comfortable, would you  
4 want to identify any of the particular kind of topic issues  
5 that you're referring to?

6 A Sure. Sure. When we flew to Germany, we were in  
7 Germany for, I can't even remember how long. It was a few  
8 weeks, or maybe it was a week and a half. But during that  
9 period coming out of Benghazi, what I'm thinking about is my  
10 family, and my family is thinking about me. But the State  
11 Department was unable to fly [REDACTED] to Germany, and my  
12 supervisor in San Francisco bought [REDACTED] a plane ticket  
13 with his own money and flew her to Germany to be with me.

14 I think it is instances such as this that need to be  
15 prepared for, and there needs to be a way to expedite any  
16 sort of request that agents or individuals might have  
17 regarding this.

18 There were several other things that took place. But I  
19 think what really needs to happen is just we need to bring  
20 this to the 21st century and say this is going to happen  
21 again and let's be prepared for our people, because people  
22 like me who volunteer to go to places like this need to be  
23 taken care of. It's important.

24 Q So in a general sense, support services for  
25 individuals who are involved in an incident after the

1 incident occurs, just to make sure that those folks are being  
2 taken care of?

3 A Yes. I mean, DOD has great programs. My agency is  
4 -- DS as a whole is still kind of young. But I think we can  
5 do a lot better than we are.

6 Ms. Sawyer. Okay. Thank you.

7 Mr. [REDACTED] Yep.

8 Ms. Sawyer. I think with that, unless you guys had some  
9 additional questions.

10 Ms. Jackson. No. But thank you.

11 Ms. Sawyer. I don't know if either of you had any  
12 comments before we go off the record.

13 Ms. Safai. I just wanted to thank you guys for making  
14 it a classified setting. I know that that has been a subject  
15 that we have gone back and forth on. So I appreciate that.

16 [Whereupon, at 4:23 p.m., the interview was concluded.]  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

## EXHIBIT 1

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

Security Requests for US Mission Benghazi

08/22/2012

### Physical Security

There are four villas on the current compound: a living-quarters villa, an office villa, a QRF villa, and a cafeteria/dining area villa. The 13 acre compound is surrounded by a cinder block wall topped with c-wire that was constructed in piecemeal format when the original larger compound was partitioned into the current, smaller compound. There are three gates, two on the north side and one on the south side. The main gate has a make-shift vehicle chute constructed out of T-walls and two [REDACTED] drop-arms. The service gate has no outer security measures, but does have a [REDACTED] drop arm on the inside. The south gate is not used and opens onto a busy commercial road with minimal outer security measures. The compound is also home to a large vineyard, an orchard, gardens, and many large trees.

- Purchase enough C-wire to line the ground inside the entire fence perimeter.
- Purchase two moveable tire killers, one for each end of the road which services the main gate and service gate.
- Create a man trap for the main gate and service gate (similar to what OBO constructed at the Sheraton hotel in Sanaa)
- Install a delta barrier at the main gate.
- Extend the T-walls at the main gate to cover the entire north wall and service gate, thus creating more set-back between the road and the compound wall.
- There is an empty lot south of the office villa that although walled, borders 4<sup>th</sup> Ring Rd and has an unmanned, weak gate that would allow a vehicle to drive within 15 feet of the office villa. (RSO does not know if this lot is part of the compound or owned by another entity. Suggest reinforcing this gate or removing it altogether).
- The perimeter wall is made out of hollow cinder blocks, which does not afford much blast protection and turned into shrapnel when the mission was attacked.
- Reinforce/repair the vehicle gates. They are a thin metal that has peeled away from the frame in places.
- Request a vault to be used as COMS office and safe-haven in the office villa. In lieu of the vault, a substantial safe haven would be required as currently there is no safe haven.
- Shatter resistant window film for the villas
- It is virtually impossible to clear the compound grounds due to the large orchard and vineyard, particularly at night. Reducing the amount of vineyards, bushes, trees (particularly those hanging over the fence) would increase visibility on the compound.



STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.



Outside South gate facing 4<sup>th</sup> Ring Road



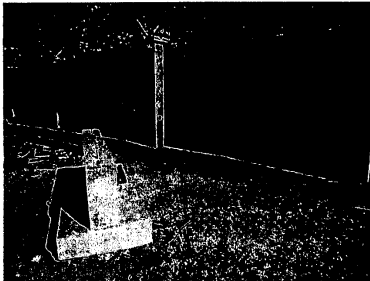
Inside South gate (access to 4<sup>th</sup> Ring Road)



Entrance to main gate from road



Inside main gate



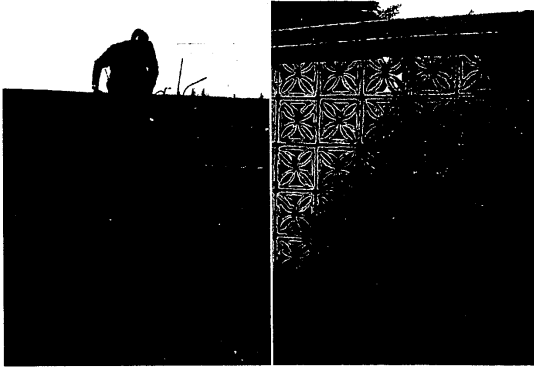
Outside service gate



Road to service gate and main gate

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

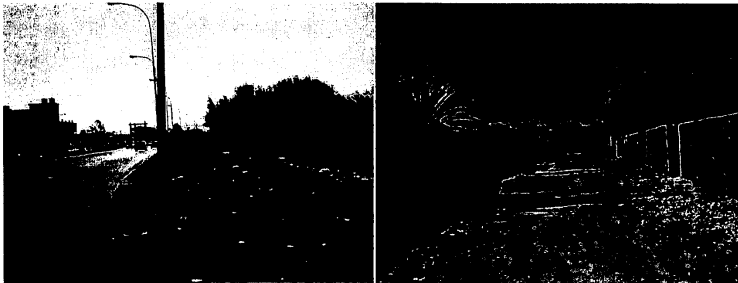
STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.



Typical portion of perimeter wall (now topped with C-wire)



Trees/vegetation growing over fence



Road bordering south wall (4<sup>th</sup> Ring Rd)

Road bordering west wall

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

## EXHIBIT 2

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 29, 2012 11:20 AM  
**Subject:** FW: RSO Turnover Docs  
**Attachments:** RSO Turnover Sept 2012.docx; securityrequests Aug2012.docx; RSO Benghazi Portfolios.xlsx; National security (via MFA).docx

FYI: for your approval

Should the Security Requests section be passed to the relevant offices/personnel here and in DC? These seem like reasonable requests.

Cheers,

[REDACTED]  
 Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
 Diplomatic Security Service  
 US Embassy Tripoli

[REDACTED]@state.gov

In Libya: [REDACTED]

From the US: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED] (Jeddah)  
**Sent:** Monday, August 27, 2012 11:49 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RSO Turnover Docs

[REDACTED] attached you will find four documents to hopefully assist in the turnover. The turnover document is an overview. The security request document details some security projects we are working on/would like to work on. The portfolio spreadsheet will show you who is managing what programs here. The national security document is the dip note you may need to resubmit if the police are not showing up to the mission. If you have not read the high-side Benghazi EAC cable released last week, that is a good source of information as well.

After two weeks of wrangling a police car to come to our mission and provide a daily 24/7 presence, one finally showed up last night. I am not confident it will stay around, but it's something to stay on top of. I have cc'd [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] the other two ARSOs here, who are squared away and eager to assist you in any way after I leave.

We look forward to your arrival, feel free to contact me with any questions.

## EXHIBIT 3

C05396013

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** [REDACTED] 2012 3:38 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Benghazi QRF agreement

**Importance:** High

**Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**SensitivityCode:** Sensitive  
**SMARTCategory:** Working

FYI

SBU  
This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** [REDACTED] 10. 2012 10:51 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Benghazi QRF agreement  
**Importance:** High

Thanks for the info.  
[REDACTED]

Any suggestions before anyone writes up an MOA. It is possible we will be there past Dec. I want to be sure we don't get stuck with something we will have trouble getting out of if we need to.

[REDACTED]

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** [REDACTED] mber 09, 2012 11:31 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement  
**Importance:** High

Acting PO, acting RSO, and TDY A/RSOs met with two 17 February Brigade outreach personnel and the QRF commander today about a change in policy the previous day issued by the Captain of their Diplomatic Mission Protection Unit that disallows our (and apparently other diplomatic missions in Benghazi with 17 February QRFs) QRF from supporting off compound movements. As I wrote in my

C05396013

previous e-mail, this restriction impacts our ability to move throughout the city and easily gain access to the VIP area of the airport as the QRF served off compound as mobile security, drivers, and expeditors. These things can still be accomplished in the QRF's absence through our driver/expeditor, but it will require substantially more effort for him and lead time for us. During the meeting, and with PO's approval, we requested they allow us a waiver of this limitation for the duration of the Ambassador's imminent visit to Benghazi. We were later told this request was denied.

As there was apparently never any signed formal agreement with the 17 February Brigade for the QRF, we've only had an oral agreement with them since we began using their QRF last year. Additionally, according to 17 February, this oral agreement only included internal defense, and due to the fact that the brigade personnel with whom the original agreement was reached are no longer in place, they would like to establish a new written agreement (MOA) with us. Since they felt that the original agreement with them did not include any off-compound moves, they stated that if we want their support for them, they requested we increase their current 35LYD/day (appx. 1050LYD/month) stipend for their personnel assigned to the Mission. To support this request for additional money for an activity they already perform, they cited the poor job market in Libya and the need for their personnel to provide for themselves. When asked for a specific amount, they advised we should determine the value ourselves, but their preference was for a hourly rate for off-compound moves. They also inquired about an additional stipend for food – which we advised was already included in their current stipend per existing documentation at the Mission. It should be noted that the current agreement also provides on-compound Mission housing for the QRF and use of the full facilities and utilities (pool, gym, electricity, water, etc.). It has also recently come to our attention that the food service staff also feeds them on occasion, although as previously noted, their current stipend includes money for food.

In anticipation of their request for a working towards a formal, signed agreement, TDY A/RSO [REDACTED] reworked the existing 17 February QRF work requirements developed by previous RSO staff at Post to develop a draft MOA. (We will provide a softcopy in a follow-up e-mail.) We reviewed the English version of the MOA with the visiting brigade personnel with the QRF commander serving as translator. This draft MOA appeared to be well-received. Upon completion of the meeting we provided an Arabic translation hardcopy of the document to them.

During the meeting the brigade personnel, they indicated they would to continue to support internal defense of the Mission with the on-compound QRF and near-by off-compound response personnel at the current rate, and also noted this included access to a previously unknown 21-person team to support off compound activities in a variety of dress (suit, military uniform, etc.) and vehicles. Details on availability, capability, or professionalism of this group was not provided. We are following up with the brigade to learn more about this unit. The brigade representatives also made a request for this 21-person unit to receive training from the RSO shop. We advised we would relay this request.

The meeting ended on good terms. We agreed to continue to work toward a signed agreement, and meet again in the short-term.

Recommended options in no order:

- Following a signed MOA, maintain our present QRF relationship and stipend amount with the understanding that they will not support off-compound moves. The already in-process hiring of an additional Mission motor pool driver will ease this transition, and provide some of the off-compound functions previously support by the QRF.
- Work to replace the 17 February QRF with a direct-hire FSN squad under a similar financial and housing arrangement. Under this arrangement, we may lose the brigade's off-compound

C05396013

response force, but it may be possible to continue this off-site component of the relationship with the correct incentive.

- Offer to raise the QRF stipend 5-10LYD/day with the agreement they would support all off-compound moves.
- Offer to provide 5-10LYD flat rate "bonus" to specific QRF personnel for supporting an unlimited number of off-compound moves per day. This would require specific tracking of which QRF member supported what off-compound moves each day.
- Although not recommended, Post could meet the brigade's request for hourly payment above the current stipend for support performed off-compound.
- Post could offer to let the QRF personnel maintain their current stipend rate while allowing them to eat the contracted food service meals in the post Cantina at no cost to them in exchange for the agreement to support off-compound moves.

Cheers,

Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
Diplomatic Security Service  
US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

@state.gov

Libyan mobile:

Libyan mobile from the US:

Benghazi desk VOIP from the US:

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, September 09, 2012 10:44 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

Hi [REDACTED]

Thanks for the heads up. During your meetings, definitely push back with the 17 Feb Commanders stressing the good working relationship and operational need for the Mission to continue off compound moves with the QRF members.

OPO would support your hiring of the QRF members on a PSA bases. Unfortunately this takes time and doesn't help with your immediate situation. In the past, and under exigent circumstances similar to yours, RSO's have brought on employees using a purchase order to start them immediately while you work to normalize their employment under the standard PSA process. Obviously, FMO and HR would have to be partners in this process.

Good luck and let us know how the meetings go.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 9:29 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

C05396013

ALCON,

We were just notified by our 17 February Brigade QRF this evening that they were told by their leadership to no longer support off-compound moves, and only provide internal defense. We believe this is part of the power struggle between the government and brigades over security functions in Benghazi.

This impacts our ability to move throughout the city and gain access to the VIP area of the airport as the QRF served as mobile security, drivers, expeditors, and internal defense. One possible solution may be to bring the current QRF members on as regular staff to perform the same functions.

As I mentioned in my below message, we were already looking to meet with 17 February Brigade leadership at their previous request. Due to this recent development, we are looking to expedite things. [REDACTED] (acting Mission PO) and I are trying to get something scheduled for tomorrow – before [REDACTED] arrival on Monday. Separately, [REDACTED] is already scheduled to meet with two brigade commanders tomorrow who appear to be affiliated with 17 February. I'll let you know how all this develops.

Cheers,

[REDACTED]

Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
Diplomatic Security Service  
US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

[REDACTED]@state.gov

Libyan mobile: [REDACTED]

Libyan mobile from the US: [REDACTED]

Benghazi desk VOIP from the US: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 7:01 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

[REDACTED]

Thanks for the feedback. Our 17 February QRF has passed that their leadership would like to meet with us. No mention of the MOA, though. Do you have any guidance on whether to attempt to have an updated MOA formally signed/executed with the 17 February Brigade commander? If it was never formally signed previously, I'm not sure of the necessity to do so at this point. I'll keep you guys in the loop on our interactions as we schedule and meet with them.

Cheers,

[REDACTED]

C05396013

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, September 08, 2012 1:28 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Benghazi QRF agreement

[REDACTED]  
 As I recall, the MOA was never shown to the 17 February Brigade commanders. At the time, the RSO was unsure what commanders response would be so it was never formally executed. I would suggest that it be reviewed again by the guys on the ground and updated to for your current conditions.  
 [REDACTED]

SBU  
 This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 07, 2012 8:04 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** FW: Benghazi QRF agreement

[REDACTED]  
 Any insight into this?

Cheers,

[REDACTED]  
 Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
 Diplomatic Security Service  
 US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

[REDACTED]@state.gov

Libyan mobile: [REDACTED]  
 Libyan mobile from the US: [REDACTED]  
 Benghazi desk VOIP from the US: [REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 07, 2012 4:11 PM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Benghazi QRF agreement

Gents,  
 Upon my departure in lye October, I believe this was still being looked at HQ levels, to include IP and L. From my



C05396013

understanding, there was concern of the longevity of our Benghazi mission, and whether Tripoli would have similar needs.

may have better recollection.

Regards,

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, September 07, 2012 08:26 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Benghazi QRF agreement

Good morning. I was hoping you could help us track down the location of a signed copy of an agreement with the TNC for Mission Benghazi's 17 February Brigade QRF personnel we believe was completed during your time here. We've located several softcopy drafts, and a complete yet unsigned and possible final hardcopy version of this document with your name on the signature line. Any insight you're able to provide will be much appreciated. All the best...

Cheers,

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Assistant Regional Security Officer / Special Agent  
 Diplomatic Security Service  
 US Embassy Tripoli (TDY US Special Mission Benghazi)

@state.gov

Libyan mobile:

Libyan mobile from the US:

Benghazi desk VOIP from the US:

## EXHIBIT 4

U.S. Department of State - Doc# C05411351 - Produced to the House of Representatives Select Committee on Benghazi per agreement on redactions/safeguarding sensitive information. No waiver of rights under the Freedom of Information Act.

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: Prep  
Date: Sunday, September 09, 2012 7:38:07 AM

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Gents,

Things we need to do:

- Develop call signs
- Confirm Annex Support
- Confirm Annex Security Brief
- Prep. Security Brief/REACT Plan
- Day and Night Drill
- Plan positions
- Sleeping Locations
- Ensure we have enough visitor badges
- Extra QRF rovers for next week?
- LGF announces visitors arrival

Edit as you need and send it back out to us so we can be organized with what we need to do.

[REDACTED]

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**INTERVIEW OF  
DIPLOMATIC SECURITY AGENT #10**

BEFORE THE

SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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HELD IN WASHINGTON, DC, APRIL 2, 2015

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APPEARANCES

FOR THE SELECT COMMITTEE ON BENGHAZI

DANA CHIPMAN, *Chief Investigative Counsel*

CRAIG MISSAKIAN, *Deputy Chief Counsel*

SARA BARRINEAU, *Investigator*

BRIEN A. BEATTIE, *Investigator*

SHERIA CLARKE, *Counsel*

KIM BETZ, *Member Outreach Liaison and Counsel*

HEATHER SAWYER, *Minority Chief Counsel*

PETER KENNY, *Minority Senior Counsel*

BRENT WOOLFORK, *Minority Senior Professional Staff*

FOR \* \* \*

MARGARET KRAWIEC

GREG CRAIG

Ms. Clarke. This is the transcribed interview of  
conducted by the House Select Committee on Benghazi. This interview  
is being conducted voluntarily as part of the committee's investigation  
into the attacks on the U.S. diplomatic facilities in Benghazi, Libya,  
and related matters pursuant to House Resolution 567 of the 113th  
Congress and House Resolution 5 of the 114th Congress.

Could the witness please state your name for the record?

Mr. \_\_\_\_\_.

Ms. Clarke. Thank you. Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, the committee really  
appreciates your appearance at this interview. Good morning. My name  
is Sheria Clarke. I'm with the committee's majority staff. And we  
will just take a moment to go around the room and have everyone introduce  
themselves for the record, and we'll start with your counsel.

Ms. Krawiec. Margaret Krawiec on behalf of \_\_\_\_\_. And  
I'd like -- I'm sorry. \_\_\_\_\_ -- and I'd like to flag one issue  
that we'd ask for everyone to be mindful in the room. We are here today  
to obviously cooperate, and we want to be very respectful of classified  
versus unclassified delineations, and we understand that the State  
Department's position is that information regarding other government  
authorities and their investigations are classified, and so being  
respectful of that, we ask that everyone in this room, you know, be  
mindful of that distinction, and to the extent that you pose questions  
that you believe will cross that line, we ask that those questions be  
posed in a classified session to take place, you know, later this  
afternoon.

Ms. Clarke. Thank you.

Ms. Sawyer. Heather Sawyer, counsel for the Democratic members.

Mr. Kenny. Peter Kenny with the minority staff.

Mr. Woolfork. Brent Woolfork with the minority staff.

Ms. Barrineau. Sara Barrineau with the majority staff.

Mr. Beattie. Brien Beattie with the majority.

Mr. Chipman. Dana Chipman with the majority staff.

Mr. Missakian. Craig Missakian with the majority staff.

Ms. Betz. Kim Betz with the majority staff.

Ms. Clarke. Thank you. Before we begin, I'd like to just go over some of the ground rules and explain how the interview will proceed. The way the questioning proceeds is that a member from the majority will ask questions first for up to an hour, and then the minority will have an opportunity to ask questions for an hour as well if they so choose. We firmly adhere to the 1-hour time limit for each side. Questions may only be asked by members of the committee or designated staff members, and we'll rotate back and forth 1 hour per side until all of the questions are completed and the interview will be over.

Unlike a testimony or a deposition in Federal court, the committee format is not bound by the rules of evidence. The witness or their counsel may raise objections for privilege, subject to review by the chairman of the committee. If these objections cannot be resolved in the interview, the witness may be required to return for a deposition or hearing. Members and staff of the committee, however, are not permitted to raise objections when the other side is asking questions.

And this has not been an issue we have encountered in the past, but I just want to make sure you're clear on the process.

We are going to begin this interview in an unclassified setting. If there are any questions that you are asked that you believe calls for a classified answer, please let us know, and we have a classified facility available for us to discuss those questions at a later point in the interview.

You're welcome to confer with your counsel at any time throughout the interview. If something needs to be clarified, just let us know. We can reask the question, or if it's a compound question, we can break the question down. If you need to discuss anything with your counsel, we can go off the record and stop the clock to provide you that opportunity.

We'd like to take a break whenever it's convenient for you. This can be after every hour of questioning, after a couple of rounds, whichever you prefer. During the rounds of questioning, if you need anything, a glass of water, to use the facilities, to talk with your counsel, just let us know, and we'll be happy to take a break.

As you can see, there is an Official Reporter that's taking down everything that's said today to make a written record. We ask that you give verbal responses to all questions, "yes" and "no" as opposed to nods of the head. And I'm going to just ask the reporter to feel free to jump in in case you do respond non-verbally.

Do you understand that?

Mr.                       Yes.

Ms. Clarke. Also we should both try not to talk over each other. Sara's actually going to be doing the majority of questioning, and I may jump in as need be, but just so that we don't talk over each other, it's easier for the reporter to get a clear record.

Please, we want you to answer our questions in the most complete and truthful manner possible, and so we'll take our time and repeat or clarify questions if needed. If you have any questions or you don't understand, again, just let us know, and we're happy to clarify or repeat those questions. If you don't know the answer to a question or do not remember, it's best not to guess. Just give us your best recollection. And if there are things you do not know or can't remember, if you can provide a name of an individual that you think may be able to provide the information.

You are required to answer questions from Congress truthfully. Do you understand that?

Mr.                      Yes.

Ms. Clarke. This also applies to questions posed by congressional staff in an interview. Do you understand that?

Mr.                      Yes.

Ms. Clarke. Witnesses that knowingly provide false testimony could be subject to criminal prosecution for perjury or for making false statements. Do you understand that?

Mr.                      Yes.

Ms. Clarke. And is there any reason you are unable to provide truthful answers to today's questions?



Mr.                    . No.

Ms. Clarke. Okay. That's the end of my preamble.

Is there anything the minority would just like to add?

Ms. Sawyer. Just briefly, and reiterate your counsel's, you know, concern that delineation between classified information and unclassified is respected. Generally we do not seek to solicit classified information, but at the end of the day, from the ranking member's perspective, the most important thing is that you feel comfortable sharing fully and completely any information that you think we need to know. So we certainly don't want you to feel uncomfortable policing that line, so you should feel free, if any question makes you uncomfortable, just to say you would like to follow up in the classified setting. We're happy to do so. We have made clear that that is an option that's available to us today.

So, again, we appreciate you being here and we look forward to hearing your testimony, but do feel comfortable just saying, "I'd like to answer that in the other setting" --

Mr.                    . Thank you.

Ms. Sawyer. -- if anything makes you feel that way.

Ms. Clarke. Okay. So the time is now 11:15 and we'll begin with our hour of questioning.

Ms. Barrineau. Thanks.

#### EXAMINATION

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q     Agent                   , we really appreciate both you coming today

and your service to our country in Benghazi and elsewhere.

Can you tell us, to get started, about your professional experience before you joined DS?

A Okay. Before I joined the Department of State, I was a presidential management fellow with

. I was an international relations specialist. I worked there for approximately 2-1/2 years.

Prior to my job at I was a graduate student at  
, where I got an MPA

.

Prior to graduate school, I was working as a linguist contractor in for the DOD. This would have been about 2001 to 2003. And prior to that, I was a in from 1999 to 2001.

And during this time, I was also in the military, originally in the Marine Corps Reserves; most recently in the Army National Guard. And , I deployed with the National Guard to Afghanistan.

Q So when did you join DS?

A 2009.

Q What made you want to be a DS agent?

A I knew about the job from my time as a . And having been a former Marine, I knew the Marines in country and I knew the RSO, and I got familiar that way and found out about the job, and after graduate school, considered applying. And I applied to DS while I was on deployment to Afghanistan. When I came back from my

deployment, I interviewed, and several months later started with the Department of State in 2009.

Q So since 2009, what have your assignments been? What have you done with DS?

A My first assignment after training with DS was to the field office where, in addition to just the standard duties that we perform there, I did a 30-day TDY to Haiti after the earthquake in 2010. I was on the second rotation, so I was there from probably day 30 to day 60 of the earthquake. And I provided security, so it was a one-person team doing security for a couple U.S. staff hospitals right along the border between the Dominican Republic and Haiti.

After that, went back to the field office, and I did a 90-day TDY to Juba, South Sudan, where I supported SCRS, which was the Office of Stabilization and Construction. They were doing expedition diplomacy out in South Sudan in and around the referendum for independence. So I was a TDY RSO for 3 months in Juba for the referendum period and beyond.

After my tour at the field office, based on my experience with SCRS, I took a position assigned to what at that time was SCRS, which is now CSO, Conflict and Stabilization Operations, which is now part of the J Bureau after the restructuring, and which is the State Department's expeditionary diplomacy wing. So I was one of five DS agents that was designated as a security liaison to CSO for their overseas engagements.

That position was administratively housed in DS/IP, which is a

Diplomatic Security/International Programs, which was led by Charlene Lamb. So I was administratively assigned to them.

Work-wise, I was fully supporting CSO, so I had visi- -- I had a couple different chains. So Charlene Lamb was one chain of command, and then the J Bureau, sort of, I operationally worked with them and for them.

Q Okay.

A And I did that for 2 years. And with them, I did deployments to -- in that capacity at that time, I did my TDY to Benghazi, and with them, I also supported Conflict and Stabilization Operations in Zimbabwe, Kenya along the Mombasa coastal area, as well as supporting the Syrian opposition operations out of Gaziantep in Turkey, and I TDY'd for Turkey to assist with that as well.

Q That's it?

A That's it.

Q Okay.

A And then after my assignment at CSO, I was paneled to become the Assistant Regional Security Officer in , so I attended Foreign Service Institute for language training. And then in summer of 2014, I departed Washington, D.C., for where I've been the ARSO in for the last 7 or 8 months or so.

I'd been through -- prior to going to Benghazi, I'd been through the DS high-threat course.

And that's kind of it in a nutshell.

Q So as part of your assignment in CSO, whichever acronym

we're using right now for it, did you volunteer to go to Benghazi or did they ask you to go to Benghazi?

A I volunteered to go to Benghazi for a couple of different reasons --

Q Okay.

A -- one of which was being housed in DS/IP, international programs, I knew -- I worked closely with , who was the desk officer for Near Eastern Affairs within IP. Because CSO had been looking to get a foothold into Libya prior to this, they were -- and they were trying to find out how they could run operations there, getting information about the reality on the ground and how feasible that was was difficult from back here in D.C.

And then I heard simultaneously from that over the Thanksgiving and Christmas and New Year's holidays, the DS staffing in Benghazi was going to be down to one agent, and that was a very big concern for . And a very good friend of mine, and I knew friends who were in Benghazi at the time, so I volunteered.

I only had about a 6-week window that I was free, but I knew that there was nobody else that could go and I knew that I would be able to get my chain of command to sign off on this because I could use it to justify if I go there for 6 weeks, I'll understand the security situation on the ground and specific to Benghazi, but I'd have a better understanding of Libya proper and that would assist me in helping CSO coordinate future operations in Libya if those ever came to fruition.

So I was able to get approval to go for 6 weeks. Sometimes it's

difficult to get approval to take a TDY, simply because you're working for another office and they don't want to give you up. So in that sense, I was helping both IP to staff it and CSO to get some ground troops on how Libya was in terms of operations.

So I volunteered. I didn't have to go, but I felt it was a good opportunity on several fronts.

Q So do I understand correctly that you started as an ARSO when you got there, and then the RSO left and you filled in for the second part?

A Yes.

Q Okay. As the acting RSO?

A When I got there, the RSO was . We were at three agents at the time. So was the ARSO,

out the New York field office was an ARSO who had already been there, and then I was the second ARSO. Several weeks before me, the staffing was at four total agents, a few weeks before that, it was at six agents, a few weeks before that, it was eight agents.

The November-to-December time period was a critical one in Benghazi, because the staffing pattern had gone from up to maybe 10 or a dozen agents when it was a protected detail and Christopher Stevens. And then as the sort of political power shifted from the opposition in Benghazi, they were moving to Tripoli, Chris Stevens was preparing to move to Tripoli, and so the agent numbers were dropping very quickly over the November to December time period from, you know, ten agents down to two and then one agent, and then it sort of bottomed

out in December and sort of maintained at that level throughout. So that was kind of a critical decision-making process as sort of the staffing pattern changed abruptly.

Q Okay. Let's back up just a little bit, and then I want to go back to the staffing.

Okay. So you volunteered to go. Did DS, or the State Department, provide you any kind of security brief, threat assessment, anything before you got there?

A They did. provided me with the sort of package that they were giving to TDY agents going out.

Q Right.

A To be fair, having already been in that office, already working in expedition diplomacy and already sort of tracking on Libya for the several months prior because of my CSO responsibilities, I was probably sort of gradually learning this as I went. So a lot of other agents, this was out of the blue, so they were given so maybe a more formal briefing.

Q Right.

A I didn't necessarily do that as a sort of 1 day, we're going to go through everything, because it was done sort of more informally between me and over several weeks.

Q So knowing that, that you sort of had a background in this to begin with, what were you expecting the situation -- let's start with security-wise, to be when you got to Benghazi?

A I was expecting it to look something like a consulate.

Q     Okay.

A     Even though it was -- and some people were informally referring to it as a consulate at the time. I was expecting this, again, to look something like a constituent post, like a consulate. So I was expecting something that reminded me of a diplomatic facility of some sort.

Q     That you had seen before --

A     That I had seen before.

Q     -- on other TDY's?

A     Yes.

Q     What were you expecting about the security environment in Benghazi at large, like, out in the city, not just on the compound, but the city at large or the region?

A     I mean, the expectation was that it was dicey, that it was unstable, that it was dangerous. So, I mean, we were fully aware that this was a -- you know, going to be a, you know, challenging TDY --

Q     Right.

A     -- and that there were lots of security issues and that there was a lack of information about who the groups were that were operating there and there were a lot of change in allegiances. So I knew full well going in there that it was a very unknown sort of threat environment.

Q     And you said that you had had the high-threat training. So when you went to Benghazi, was the State Department considering that a high-threat environment or a high-threat post? I know a lot of those



designations came about after Benghazi, but did you understand that you were going to do a high-threat TDY?

A I don't recall at the time, because a lot of things changed administratively after that --

Q Right.

A -- but it was designated as high-threat-trained agents only. I do know that at the time, there had not been that many agents that had gone, so I know that was doing a very diligent and good job of hand selecting agents.

I don't remember high threat being the only criteria, but he was specifically trying to get agents that had military, and preferably combat experience or other relevant experience like medical EMT, some sort of experience that would lend itself to play in very much a sort of paramilitary type of setting.

I don't think at the time it was hard and fast rule that you had DS high threat, although it might have been, because I had it, so it wasn't an issue.

Q So it didn't matter?

A Yeah.

Q Okay. So you landed in Benghazi, expecting it to look sort of like a consulate.

A Uh-huh.

Q What did it look like?

A It was basically three residential villas, very nice ones, that we just knocked down a couple walls in between them and called

it a mission.

Q Did it have the official diplomatic status of a mission?

A At that time, I did not know, and at that time, it was not clear to me that that specific delineation -- exactly how that delineation worked and what exactly the repercussions of that were.

Q Okay.

A So at the time, it was never -- I was never told that you are not at a diplomatic facility. I sort of came to discover that as I was there, but it was very -- I don't think I was ever told directly, and it was difficult to be explained exactly what the status was.

I requested very strongly to get some sort of documentation or official designation or an explanation of what we were and what our legal status was, and I sent emails to that end, and I never really got a satisfactory explanation. So there was an element of confusion as to what exactly we were and what we were entitled to.

Q And did that concern you that you didn't know exactly what the legal or diplomatic status of the facility was?

A It concerned me greatly.

Q Why?

A At the time -- and, again, my -- I learned a lot in the, you know, 5 weeks that I was there, so my understanding of Benghazi at the end versus the beginning was completely different. And also, because of the position that I was in with an IP --

Q Right.

A -- I continued to learn about Benghazi. And stuff that I

had learned while I was in Benghazi helped inform me about things I saw after I left Benghazi.

Q Right.

A While I was in Benghazi initially, once I became RSO, the compound was woefully inadequate in terms of physical security. There were a whole number of things that we didn't have, and a lot of things that we did have were completely insufficient.

Q Okay.

A So once I became RSO, I started a flurry of requests asking for physical security upgrades --

Q Okay.

A -- funding for physical security upgrades. And I was getting non-committal and confusing answers as to why that was not going to happen, so I was pressing at DS/IP for a clear understanding of why, you know, seemingly simple and reasonable requests are somehow not occurring. And so , you know, gave me some explanation as to what the background on this was.

Q So what was the -- well, okay, first, let's go back before I ask you what the explanation was.

So you understood that with a consulate, and correct me if I'm wrong, or an embassy or an official mission, that there would be minimum security, physical security standards that would have to be met?

A Yes.

Q And you, when you got there, didn't think you had, forget the maximum, didn't feel like you had the bare minimum?

A No.

Q Okay. So let's start with what you requested before you tell me what the explanation is. Do you remember specifically what you thought Benghazi needed to meet just the minimum threshold to have a presence there?

A Yes. Towards the -- after several one op sort of requests, I put together a list of -- and for full context, I'll have go into the explanation about why I requested what I did.

Q Absolutely.

A So I put together a list of, call it a dozen requests in terms of guard platforms, sandbags, concertina wire, escape hatches, guard booths, lighting, requests towards the end of December. I sent that out initially in kind of an informal email, because we didn't have any ability to send cables.

Q Okay.

A sent it out again, because there was some confusion about it the week after I left, so it went out again under his name. So we made initial requests. I think the total estimate of all these things was about \$26,000.

Q Okay.

A And they were all deemed to be field expedient fixes that could be done with local labor and local material and that would have, you know, very little cost to implement and it could be done very quickly.

Q And this is to get us to, like, the minimum standards, not

we're building a fortress in Benghazi?

A No. This was to look outside the window and see glaring deficiencies and say, we could get this done in a week --

Q Okay.

A -- and we would be better off in a week than we are today.

Q So you sent that request in informally via email, because you could not -- you didn't have the capacity to send a cable from there --

A No.

Q -- right?

A No.

Q Okay. So who did you email?

A I'd have to take a look at the email to see if anyone was cc'd. Everything I did was channeled through --

Q Okay.

A -- who was the desk officer.

Q Okay.

A Just a point to clarify, because some people may have experience with constituent posts and consulates and other things. Typically a constituent post, like a consulate, would fall under the embassy.

Q Right.

A Benghazi was such a weird situation, that Benghazi was -- from my point of view, was being run out of Washington, D.C.

Q Okay.

A We had -- we had almost no relationship with Tripoli.

Q Okay.

A They would be cc'd on things, and they did some things administratively for us, some finance type, accounting things they would do, because we didn't have any personnel to do it.

Q But you didn't need a request to go through the RSO in Tripoli?

A We would see cc them --

Q Okay.

A -- on everything, but, again, it was a very unusual situation, where normally you would be under the embassy in Tripoli when -- patch everything through them. We were dealing almost exclusively with D.C., so I would email, primarily, as the point of contact to go up the DS/IP chain.

Q So you asked him -- tell -- one more time. So you asked him exactly for what? You asked for sandbags, you said?

A Sandbags, concertina wire, lighting, guard platforms that would go about halfway up the wall, because we had -- on three sides we had 10-foot walls --

Q Okay.

A -- and we didn't have cameras on them, so we couldn't see on the other side of the wall.

Q Okay.

A And they were too high for us to see over. We asked for guard platforms so that we could be able to get elevated so we could

look over the walls for observations, also so we could have fields of fire if we were being attacked, and also for an escape route if we had to flee the compound if we were attacked.

Q     Okay.

A     So we asked for things like that. We asked for lighting, because the compound was pitch black at night. And one of our walls was 4 feet tall in the back from the street, so there was zero ability to prevent anybody from hopping over the fence, and then you had just a pitch black area to then come into the compound.

Q     And all of that wasn't covered with cameras, either?

A     No.

Q     Okay. So you sent this email. And what, if any, response did you get?

A     That was -- that email was sent right as I was leaving.

Q     Okay.

A     So I didn't get much personal follow-up on that.

Q     Okay.

A     That was right towards the end.

Q     Had you -- was that the first time you'd made any of those requests, or had you been making requests all along and that was kind of the consolidated effort?

A     That was a consolidated effort. It was requested by  
that I do that.

Q     Okay.

A     I -- a lot of -- a lot of these conversations happened by

phone.

Q     Okay.

A     Most of the pertinent information was done verbally. And I had been told by                   that really no controversial information would be passed by email, so anything that was really of a sensitive nature would have to be done by phone; that anything that was sent by email that could be deemed later to be controversial would not be answered.

Q     Did he explain why that was?

A     He did. And this -- so this was a conversation I held with                   . And I'll complete the two things --

Q     Okay.

A     -- the issue of the physical security request that I wanted and also the inability to really communicate frankly via email.

Q     Okay.

A     When I took over as RSO, I called                   , because I was getting the runaround on some physical security requests, complaining to him vigorously, you know, what the problem was. I told him that, you know -- to use frank language, I told him that this was a suicide mission; that there was a very good chance that everybody here was going to die; that there was absolutely no ability here to prevent an attack whatsoever; that we were in a completely vulnerable position, and we needed help fast, we needed it quickly, or we were going to have dire consequences.

                  told me -- and he did this in good faith so I would



understand where I stood.

Q Right.

A He told me that -- , he said -- because I asked for -- the security force I asked for in that conversation, I said, , our perimeter security is non-existent, we have walls with lattices that somebody can shoot through; we have walls with footholds people can climb over; we have a 4-foot wall back here; we have no lighting. So all these physical security standards, especially around the perimeter of the building were completely insufficient, and we needed large amounts of money and this was going to take time, it was going to be expensive, but we needed this desperately to make this place safe.

Q Right.

A told me, he said, , he said, everybody back here in D.C. knows that people are going to die in Benghazi, and nobody cares and nobody is going to care until somebody does die. The only thing that you and I can do is save our emails for the ARB that we all know is coming.

So this was December of 2011. He made it very clear to me that in DS/IP, in the State Department, and he was speaking very broadly, that everybody knew that deaths in Benghazi were very likely, and that they were already talking about an ARB. And so he told me that everybody is being very careful about what they're putting in emails, because people are worried about how these emails are going to look --

Q When the ARB comes calling.

A -- when the ARB comes calling. So he told me, he said, you're not going to get answers to these questions by email. They're going to be by phone.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q And did that prove to be accurate?

A Yes.

Q Did he give any indication of who he was referring to, in terms of who knew that Benghazi was bad and knew that people were going to die and didn't want to deal with sensitive information via email? Did he --

A Specifically, who would not deal with sensitive information was -- specifically, he named Charlene Lamb --

Q Okay.

A -- and so the DS/IP chain.

In terms of how bad the situation was in Benghazi, he said everybody back in D.C. dealing with this. He was in meetings every day on this, and everybody knows. This is common knowledge. You're not telling us anything new. He said, you know, DS agents before you told me the same thing. Everyone knows. This is not news to us.

Q Who, since he -- and you may or may not know this. If you don't know, that's okay. But if he was in meetings about Benghazi back in D.C., who did you get the impression was calling the shots on how Benghazi was being run and on whether or not these upgrades were being denied? Does that make sense?

It sounds like he wasn't the one saying, no, you can't have it. Did you get any indication of who was saying, no, you can't have that?

A I could answer that in a couple of parts. He told me at the time that I was in Benghazi, he gave me some indication of why we were in the situation that we were in. Subsequent to that, you know, working in IP, I learned of other information that helped explain what I had been told in Benghazi.

So when I was in Benghazi and when I was asking about the inability to get these funds for the security upgrades we needed --

Q Right.

A -- told me this by phone. said, , you can't have any of the things that you want; there's no money. And he said, Pat Kennedy has not given any money for Benghazi. There's no money for you guys there for security.

He said, the only -- again, said this in good faith to try help us.

Q Right.

A said, the only thing you can have -- he said, put together a list of things that you can do local labor, local material, and they don't cost anything. Put that list together, and I, , will do everything I can to get some nickels and dimes from different budgets to try to fund those, you know, really field-expedient, low-cost upgrades.

He said, that's all you're going to get. He said, if you ask for anything more, all you're going to do is piss off the chain of command,

because you're going to embarrass them. So, you know, he's like -- and he even told me, he said, it's your choice. He said, you can ask for things you're never going to get and you're going to piss off the chain of command and you will probably get sent home.

And the purpose of this, I was an untenured 4 at the time, so it was -- you know, I was reminded of that, that I needed to be very careful about the tone of my email and the impact it's going to have on department leadership because I'm an untenured agent that does not have job security while being in charge of Benghazi.

So, yes, I was told that the only way that we can get you security upgrades is if they basically don't cost anything and we can, sort of, you know, steal a couple bucks here and there from other pots of money, that there is no budget for Benghazi.

Q How is there no budget for Benghazi?

A This is something I started to understand while I was in Benghazi, but this was the first time I had been faced with this situation, so I had to kind of muddle through the bureaucratic process. But it's something I became familiar with in IP again at a later date.

Q Okay.

A And one of the reasons I had continued familiarity with this was, as part of CSO, I dealt with on a daily basis, before and after Benghazi, expeditionary diplomacy, so sort of working outside of embassies in these sort of nonofficial compounds. So I, you know, learned about that and became more informed about this process both before and after Benghazi.

So, at the time, I didn't realize that, based on the memo, the action memo to Pat Kennedy to extend the mission in Benghazi, that we had been, I don't know if you would say designated a nonofficial diplomatic facility or just not designated as an official diplomatic facility, but that designation was not made. The way we were structured, we were not a diplomatic facility.

Q     Okay.

A     So notification was never made to the Libyan Government that we were a diplomatic facility.

And, again, this is what I was starting to understand then and what I learned later, that if you are a diplomatic facility within the State Department, you have physical security requirements that are in the FAM, the Foreign Affairs Manual. And it is a very detailed, large set of rules that you have to follow to operate a diplomatic facility. It requires you to have physical security standards that are typically going to be expensive and will take time to do.

If you are in a nondiplomatic facility, there are no security standards. They don't exist. So it's all or nothing.

And, again, the significance of that, initially, may have been a little lost on me, as I didn't understand necessarily the ramifications. But this is what I was getting as I was sending emails to different offices in Benghazi, that I would want, for example, to build guard booths for the guards, and I would ask the office in DS that funds guard booths, can I get, you know, \$1,500 to buy three \$500 guard booths that I can do here locally? And what I was told was, no,

you can't, because you are in a diplomatic facility -- or you're in a nondiplomatic facility that does not have any physical security standards. Statutorily, I can't give you any money out of my budget to pay for a guard booth that you don't rate.

So regardless of how much money was in a particular budget to pay for a particular thing, they weren't able to do it because we were not a diplomatic facility. For example, the perimeter wall should have been -- a lot of these things should have been done by OBO, the Overseas Building Operations. They wouldn't fund us because we weren't a diplomatic facility.

So we had a perimeter wall that was completely woefully inadequate, provided really no security for us, an obvious thing that needed to be fixed. And the problem was just, you don't have a requirement for a wall, for a perimeter wall, so we can't statutorily give you any money for something that you don't statutorily require. There's no FAM requirement for it.

And this continues to be an issue with expeditionary diplomacy, that there are no FAM requirements for what physical security is outside of a diplomatic facility. So once you leave that official diplomatic status, you are really in a gray zone, not just in terms of status but in terms of access to funding. The money can be there; you just can't have it.

And this is -- to kind of illustrate that, because, you know, it talks about access to particular funding versus other funding, our expenses -- and this is on the action memo. This was sort of an addendum

to the action memo that Pat Kennedy signed. Our expenses -- and this is recollection. I think we were paying \$70,000 a month for rent for the three villas --

Q Okay.

A -- and we were paying \$15,000 a month for a chef, cash. So we had a chef on the compound, an Egyptian guy. And I think it was based on 7 people at \$70 a day, let's call it 500 bucks a day, so it was about \$15,000 cash that we were paying this guy to cook a couple meals for us.

Because -- and I'm not a finance person, so I don't know the source of the funding that paid for that, but because that was funding for per diem food, travel expenditures, there was no limit to the amount of money we could have for that.

Q So there was money somewhere.

A We paid \$15,000 cash out of our office to a chef.

Q Okay.

A And we were getting denied \$500, \$1,000, \$2,000 for security upgrades.

Q Because the standards don't apply to a nondiplomatic facility.

A Because, yeah, the offices that control that money just statutorily can't give it to you.

Q Right.

A But wherever that food money came from is fair game. You can use that anywhere. But, again, I'm not a finance expert, so I can't



tell you why we could get \$15,000 a month for food --

Q Right.

A -- but we couldn't get any money for security. And it was just bureaucratic technicality. It was where the money came from and what you could legally use it for.

So that was the issue. We were in a nondiplomatic facility. No physical security requirements applied. Therefore, the offices that would normally fund the requests that we were making couldn't fund us.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q I have a question. So you said that you don't know if it was that there was no designation or that it was designated as a nondiplomatic facility. But did you come to an understanding of why either there was no decision made or there was an affirmative decision to designate it as a nondiplomatic facility?

A The decision to do that was made by Pat Kennedy. I mean, well, the action to do it was made by Pat Kennedy. So I am assuming that that decision was made by Pat Kennedy or somebody above him. So I have no visibility on that decisionmaking process, but the memo that created that situation was the one that was signed by Pat Kennedy. So who decided that that was the route to go and why, you would have to ask them.

Operationally, practically speaking, if you had made it a diplomatic facility -- and this is just as me speaking about, from my experience, what would have happened in Benghazi if you had done that. If you had said this is an official diplomatic facility, you would have

immediately been completely out of standards and in violation of the entire FAM. And somebody would have had to have waived that and signed their name to it and taken responsibility, or you would have had to close the facility down immediately. By making it not a diplomatic facility, nobody had to sign a waiver to maintain it and there were no standards to meet.

One of the other issues that I think we encountered was, in terms of local security, we had five members of the February 17 Martyrs Brigade who lived on compound with us, and they were outstanding. We had them by way of a dipnote, so it was sort of an informal process. We'd given a dipnote to the entity that seemed to be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Benghazi, we asked for some security, and they provided us with these five soldiers that we only paid them a daily per diem. And they lived in a building on our compound.

They provided that for us, but my understanding -- again, towards the end, I understood this better. My understanding was the Libyans were doing that, sort of, voluntarily.

And, again, my understanding now of the designation of official versus nonofficial is that, had we been official, the Libyan Government would have been obligated to provide us security. If we're not an official diplomatic facility, I don't think there's any obligation under international law for the Libyan Government to protect us, to provide security.

So they provided us the five February 17th guys, which was great, but when we would ask for more, when threat levels -- this became an

issue, I believe, later -- I don't believe there was a legal obligation for them to do so because of our status as a nonofficial -- we weren't accredited, the building wasn't accredited, it wasn't a diplomatic facility.

So we were unable to even provide any funding for our own security; I don't think the Libyans were obligated, as well, to provide anything for us either.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q Okay. So let's go back to that for just a second. Since you have spent some time in CSO both before Benghazi and after Benghazi, working with other expeditionary diplomacy posts, for lack of a better word, did you see anything before or after Benghazi that -- how shall I say this -- looked like the Benghazi model? The notion of just put it out there, don't call it a facility, and then you don't have to meet any standards.

A Yes. Some of that's going to talk about current operations.

Q Okay.

A And I prefer to do that in another setting --

Q Okay. That's fair.

A -- because if I identify current --

Q Absolutely. But you have seen --

A Yes.

Q Okay. Cool. We'll save that.

Okay. So let's go back -- sorry. Let's go back to Feb 17th. So

you had sent a dipnote. Well, not you specifically, I don't think, but DS or the people in Benghazi sent a dipnote to the Libyan Government, and they sent you, kind of on a good-faith effort, these Feb 17 guys.

A Yes.

Q Was there any sort of, for lack of a better word, contract for what they were going to do for you? Or was it just kind of they showed up, and it was a verbal agreement where you guys built the relationship with them?

A Ad hoc. We built the relationship with them.

Q So anything they did or didn't do was kind of an agreement where you just made it on the fly?

A We had no operational control over them, no. We provided them housing, and we gave them, I think, like, \$27 a day, which for them was a very good paycheck --

Q Right.

A -- so they were very happy to work for us.

Q Right.

A But, yeah, there was nothing that I ever saw that was any sort of contract obligation. It was just sort of done on an ad hoc basis.

Q So what did you expect that they were going to do for you, both on a daily basis and if things ever went south?

A On a daily basis, they were great to have. There were five of them. Typically, you know, there might be one to three of them around. They were armed with an AK and two magazines.

So, I mean, the biggest thing that we would use them for operationally daily was they could, if there was an issue, like, at the front gate, they could go engage it, because they speak the language, and they had a lot of street cred, so people would listen to them. They had pull. So if we had a situation, you know, again, a disgruntled person would come to the front gate or there was something going on, we could have one of them go out there and talk to somebody or address it. And they would, you know, typically handle it probably easier than we would.

We would use them sometimes to accompany us or take us places in Benghazi. That really wasn't part of what they were supposed to do, so we didn't always do it, but if we really felt we wanted to have one of them with us, sometimes we'd grab one and take them with us.

So they were a great comfort to have living there. But, again, there was only five of them, and, typically, you know, two or three might be there at any given time.

Q Did they generally -- did they speak English or --

A One or two of them spoke some English, and we dealt with them.

Q Okay. So what did you understand their role to be if there was ever any kind of a security incident or an evacuation necessary or an attack? What did you think their role would be?

A It was very undefined because it was not necessarily a formal relationship. So we understood their role to be to help us.

Q Okay.

A There was a large February 17th Martyrs Brigade camp in town, so we knew that, if we needed it, we had a line of communication with their people.

And, again, they sometimes were just fixers for us for little things that would come up. But it was just nice to have a couple extra guys on the compound.

Q Absolutely.

Did you think that if you had needed them -- and "them," the ones on the compound, and the larger unit in town -- did you expect that they would respond if you asked for help? I guess, what was your confidence level that that would happen?

A My confidence level was the five guys that we had when I was there, that I had full confidence in them individually.

Q Right.

A Those five had been part of the revolution, and they had been part of all the initial events in Benghazi with Christopher Stevens, with Susan Rice, with John McCain. They were intricate parts of all those operations. So I felt that they were personally extremely loyal to the U.S., to us, to Chris Stevens, to Susan Rice on a personal basis because they had had a pretty close relationship with all those people. I had no doubt that those five guys personally would be there for us.

I had no confidence that people from their organization would be there for us --

Q Okay.

A -- because they -- again, these five guys individually, it was irrelevant that they were February 17th Martyrs Brigade. These five guys had just been with the revolution and the U.S. mission there from day one. I felt they had a very personal stake in it, in our success. And, at that time, they were still passionate believers in the Benghazi revolution.

So I personally put my life several times completely in their hands, and I never had any doubts in doing so. I would not have felt the same way about any other militia members out there.

Q That showed up.

A Yes.

Q Okay. So you had the Feb 17 militia. Did you also have a local guard force or something like it?

A We did. We had a local guard force of sorts. It was 20 guys. They were pretty young kids, mostly just wearing plain clothes. So we had 2 10-man shifts. Typically five or six would show up per shift.

Q Out of 10?

A Out of 10.

Q Okay.

A This was not -- and this was one of those things where, you know, we had a local guard force, but in no way did what we have look like a local guard force program as it is supposed to exist in the Department of State.

Q Right.

A     What we had were just a bunch of guys that we gave some money to who showed up, and they had a panic button. And, typically, for a 10-man shift, 5 or 6 would show up. So for a 13-acre compound with various exits, entrances, we had 5 or 6 guys that we would kind of post out there. And they were unarmed, untrained.

And our expectation of them, since they did work for us and we were paying them -- the Feb 17th, we gave them a stipend --

Q     Right.

A     -- but we paid the local guards. We were very clear in our expectation with them that if we get attacked and we have an incident, we have no expectation for you to defend us because you can't.

Q     Right.

A     It's, hit the panic button just to let us know, and then run.

Q     Okay.

A     They were fully -- we're okay with you doing that.

Q     Okay.

A     Just disappear.

So, typically, with those guys, you know, again, we'd have five or six. We had no coverage on, you know, blind spots on our compound with those five or six guys. We gave up a lot in terms of that.

So that was our experience with the local guard force program -- or the local guards at the time. And that was not the contractor. That was just the locally hired guys that we had.

Q     So did every guard have a panic button, or was there, like,



one at each gate? Do you remember?

A I can't recall exactly if every single guard had it or just at the entrances.

Q Did they have radio coms with you?

A Yes.

Q Okay. So they could at least explain to you, if they spoke English, why maybe they had pushed the button as they were running off?

A They know. The February 17th guys had radios --

Q Okay.

A -- and so, sort of, the operational reality was the LGF would hit the panic button and the Feb 17th guys would sort of take some control of the local guards and that communication. So the communications were local guards to the couple February 17th guys who spoke some English and we had a daily relationship with, and they would probably come through that route.

Q Okay. So you're not going to know immediately -- if the local guards hit the button, you're not going to know immediately where the problem is on the compound.

A No.

Q You're just going to know there is a problem.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And was there a formal contract with the local guards, or was that, again, just some guys you hired locally?

A To be perfectly honest, I'm not sure. All the money stuff was being handled by the IMO.

Q Okay.

A The TDY information management officer, that was sort of their function, that they were there to make sure the unit worked, and also they were the money guy.

Q Okay.

A So they handled the disbursement of money and those contract issues.

Q Okay. So let me ask this, then.

Mr. Craig. There's a gazillion people. I'm sorry.

Ms. Barrineau. No problem.

Mr. Beattie. Let's go off the record.

Ms. Barrineau. Let's go off the record.

[Discussion off the record.]

Ms. Barrineau. Okay. We'll go back on the record.

And, for the record, we'd like to add the addition of an additional counsel. Mr. Greg Craig has joined us.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q Okay. So I think when we stopped we were talking about the local guard force, and -- oh, you said you didn't know exactly where the money was coming from.

So my question is, when 5 or 6 guys out of 10 would show up for a shift, was there any recourse or chain of -- was there anything you could do about it, or were you just stuck with the 5 or 6 for the shift?

A In practical terms, no. There was nobody else to hire. There was really -- there was no management. And, to be perfectly

honest, we were overwhelmed. With two agents on the ground --

Q Right.

A -- I mean, we were working from 7 in the morning until midnight. And a lot of things administratively fall through the cracks simply because you're doing too many things in one day --

Q Right.

A -- and you're out driving around town doing this, so a lot of this week work you're trying to do in the waning hours of the day and the nighttime. So, no, there was very little that we could do.

Q And even if you had time, not really anybody you could call anyway and say, where are the rest of the guys?

A No. No.

Q So you brought up an interesting point that I was going to get to but we'll go there now.

So when you arrived, it was you and two other agents.

A Yes.

Q Did that staffing level stay pretty consistent while you were there, or did it go up or down?

A No. When I first got there, it was me and two other agents.

Q Okay.

A Several weeks later, it was down to two agents, myself and one other agent. And as I was getting ready to depart, we were going to go to one agent. And if the staffing pattern remained the way it was, with our expected incoming agents, we were going to go down to zero agents. And that would have been around January 4th or 5th or

so, we would go down to zero agents.

Q Who was going to do security of the compound if there were zero agents?

A That was a very good question. There's background on this, but in and around December 28, the staffing pattern got so bad that I sent an email and I also -- this was preceded by a phone call. I threatened to abandon the mission.

Q Okay.

A I threatened to pull everybody out and just unilaterally abandon Benghazi.

Q And what were you told when you threatened to do that?

A Can I backtrack --

Q Absolutely.

A -- a little bit?

So I began requesting additional support to come out of Tripoli from our MSD, Mobile Security Deployment, which is sort of our SWAT team, because I think they had 18 MSD agents in Tripoli. I asked for a couple to come to Benghazi to assist us, because, simultaneously with all this, we had open-source reporting in Benghazi that there was a potential vehicle-borne improvised explosive device attack planned against Western consulates in Benghazi over the Christmas-New Year's holiday. We assumed that to be us. And we were going to be at two agents and then down to one agent.

So I was asking for -- I think it might have been as early as the 23rd, 22nd or 23rd, I began asking for this TDY support. And I was

told we were not going to get it.

Q Who told you that?

A by phone. The MSD commander in Tripoli told me it's probably not going to happen. It has to be dealt with by DS/IP and MSD command --

Q Okay.

A -- and that it was not going to happen.

Q Okay.

A So, by February 28, it was getting to the point where I was going to leave and leave by himself for a day. And because of delays with visas, et cetera, there was going to be a gap of no agents if left when he was planning to leave, on January 4.

Ms. Clarke. And just to --

Mr. . Yeah.

Ms. Clarke. You said February 28. Did you mean --

Mr. . December 28.

Ms. Clarke. -- December 28?

Mr. . I apologize. I apologize.

So I called by phone, and I told him that if he didn't get me bodies, that I was going to abandon the compound.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q Okay.

A That is not something I can put in an email.

Q Right.

A I would have faced retribution.

Q Right.

A So I submitted an email where I gave DS/IP three options. I said, based on the fact that we're going down to a zero-DS-agent staffing pattern and I can't get TDY agents to come out from Tripoli, which you could do in a day -- and there's, again, 18 agents in Tripoli -- I gave three options.

I believe they were, I can leave the two Americans on the compound, the principal officer and the IT guy, by themselves and just have

leave as planned by himself and leave the two Americans unguarded. Or I can evacuate the entire compound, and we just all go to the airport, get on a plane, and fly to Turkey and abandon the compound. And I gave a third option, which we'll discuss at a later time.

Q Right.

A And all those options were clearly not going to work.

Q Right.

A But I believe from the 23rd until the 28th, when I was requesting the MSD replacements, I actually was never denied. I never got an email. I never got a response. I was told off line by people, by colleagues, friends who were at MSD, that you're not going to get it. And I think it had been hinted at in emails that you're not going to get it, but I couldn't get a definitive answer. Nobody would answer those emails.

So I believe on the 28th I sent the email threatening and followed with a phone call saying I was going to abandon the compound. And then

I believe immediately after that I got an email from MSD saying, oh, we could probably send two agents out there. So it took me threatening to abandon Benghazi to get an indication that they might send two MSD agents.

Q And that response came from MSD, still not IP?

A From MSD.

They ended up -- I don't believe they ended up sending them, because at the last minute volunteered to extend another month to avoid this, to his credit.

Q So I assume from the fact that you were threatening to abandon the post that you didn't think that zero agents or one agent was sufficient for that compound. Did you think that two or three agents was sufficient for that compound?

A No.

Q What did you think -- bare minimum, how many agents did you think that compound needed to be able to secure it in the fashion that it needed to be secured for Americans to be there?

A If you asked me how many agents I think we needed to secure that compound, it would probably be in the dozens.

Q Okay.

A The compound as it was, there was really no way to secure that compound. I mean, there was no right answer on the number of agents.

Q That wasn't going to fix the problem.

A No.

Q Just more bodies would not have really helped you with --

A There would have had to be enough bodies to -- you know, again, we're talking dozens of agents with weapons to be able to defend that compound.

Q Do you know why -- and if you don't, that's okay, but I know you talked earlier about how the staffing decreased pretty drastically from 10 down to where you got down to about 3 when you got there. Do you have any idea why the staffing decreased so drastically or who made that decision?



Mr. [REDACTED] Yes. Well, I was told by [REDACTED], the desk officer, when I asked him, why don't we have more agents here -- because the memo that Pat Kennedy signed on December 27 -- but I had seen the edits, so I knew it was coming, people knew what the content was -- it said staffing should be at five DS agents.

Also in that memo, we had inserted in there while we were there that only two of these five agents are currently staffed, indicating we were at 40 percent security staffing.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q Right.

A It still ended up being signed. I asked why we didn't have five agents, which is not sufficient but --

Q But that's what you'd said we have.

A We need bodies. Why can't we at least have what's in the memo as a minimum?

Q Right.

A [REDACTED] told me that Charlene Lamb had said under no circumstances are we ever going to have more than three agents in Benghazi at any one time.

Q And while you were there, were there ever more than three agents in Benghazi?

A No.

Q Okay.

A And so, yeah, when you have three agents as your cap, you are typically at one and two because somebody is always coming and going and visa issues.

Q Right.

A But we were told that we were capped unofficially at three, as a maximum, by Charlene Lamb.

Q By Charlene Lamb.

Ms. Barrineau. Do you have any --

Ms. Clarke. Just a couple of followup questions.

BY MS. CLARKE:

Q One, you said that you would need dozens of them, DS agents, to secure the compound and that you thought that it was impossible to defend the compound. Can you break that down? Why did you think it was impossible to defend the compound?

A There was no outer perimeter security that would prevent anybody from almost instantaneously coming in the compound. And inside the compound, there was no safe haven to go to to protect yourself.

So the discussions that I had with the principal officer, who was while was there, was we all knew that this ended in a firefight in the compound. And there's no way to survive a firefight in a villa compound. There's nowhere to go, there's nowhere to run.

I mean, all you can do is shoot everybody who is trying to attack

you. That's the only way you survive that. And there's no way that one, three, five guys can do that against any opposing force. You would literally need dozens of guys to hold off, you know, a group that was trying to attack you.

That's why.

Q So it was the size of the compound and then the way the -- the facilities that were in the compound, the walls, et cetera, that led you to believe that it was impossible to defend the compound?

A Yes. There was no ability to prevent people from getting in, and inside the compound there was no place for us to go to be secure.

At a typical embassy or consulate, you always have a safe haven. So you have what they call a "hard line," which, if the perimeter wall is breached, you can lock down what they call the hard line, which basically seals up the consulate building. And there's a safe haven room within that building that everybody can go to.

And so worst-case scenario, 1,000 guys come into an embassy or a consulate, there is a room that everybody can go to that nobody is ever going to be able to get into. You are safe there. And that did not exist at all in Benghazi.

So there was nowhere to go to internally, and there was no way to keep people out from the external.

Q You also talked about that you had submitted several requests for upgrades and that you kind of consolidated all of those requests into one email. But during your time in Benghazi, were any of those requests granted?

A The time was too short to actually see them granted. A few of them were.

The one that is most significant in terms of that would have been -- I requested, I think, 17 jersey barriers from the British -- what was their mission that they had abandoned because it was too big for them to defend. They had about 100 jersey barriers about 3 blocks from us.

No jersey barriers were set back from our compound, but Tripoli had been trying to get -- some of our gates didn't even lock. So we had to put armored vehicles to prevent them from opening. And there was no anti-ram to keep anybody from ramming through the compound. So we had to put armored vehicles at the gates just to block anything.

Tripoli was trying to take our armored vehicles. We were trying to fight that. Because they needed them to drive around; we needed them to prevent somebody from driving through our gates.

So I was trying to get funding to get these jersey barriers that we could use to create vehicle traps and standoff, and it was going to be a minimum of 17 to do so. This was, I think, . There's a lot of emails I have from him on this. He's with DS/PSD, and I think that's Physical Security Division, but I'm not positive on the acronym.

His role was just an advisory role. And he had said that OBO should fund this, but they won't because we are a temporary facility. So his office doesn't have any funding, but he was going to try to get some nontraditional ways to get some money to help us out to get these

jersey barriers.

But the only way he could justify it was by saying that, if we get these jersey barriers, that will free up three fully armored vehicles to send to Tripoli. So it benefits Tripoli. And because these jersey barriers are, you know, concrete objects, in theory, we could load them up on trucks and ship them to Tripoli when we eventually close Benghazi down.

So I was told after the fact by                      that, in fact, that \$11,900 was, in fact, found and was send to Tripoli and they did, in fact, get those jersey barriers. But this was, you know, I think months after the request went in. And it was predicated on the fact that you can have the money because it's freeing up the FAVs to go to Tripoli, and those are objects that can be removed from Benghazi and sent back to Tripoli.

And that, though, to me, was a success story. I mean,  
and his office did what they could to get us something.

BY MR. BEATTIE:

Q I have a question about requests for additional security. When Ambassador Pat Kennedy testified in front of the House Foreign Affairs Committee --

A Yes.

Q -- he testified that all the requests made by Embassy Tripoli on behalf of the consulate in Benghazi were met, except one. And I believe his testimony was that there was a request for massive guard towers that was not granted. I was wondering if you were familiar

with that request.

A It's my request, and that was an inaccurate characterization of that.

Q That was your request?

A It was my request.

Q But it was inaccurate?

A Yes.

Q How was it inaccurate?

A Nobody ever requested guard towers. What I requested was a guard platform. So, again, we had 10-foot walls with no ability to see over them and no cameras. What I requested was a platform that would be built up about, you know, 5 feet up with steps.

That way, if there was something happening on the other side of the wall, I could go up the steps, stand on the platform, peer over the top, and be able to have a field of vision and a field of fire, if I needed it, for what was on the other side. And, also, that would be a way for us to evacuate over the wall.

Somehow this got into some idea of giant guard towers at, you know, the corners of the compound, with agents looming. I don't know where that came from, but that was never part of the request. But, again, nobody ever followed up with me and asked me for further clarification or what I meant by that request.

Q Okay.

A But that was my request he was referring to.

Q And then one last question on that. Ambassador Kennedy

used the specific formulation that requests made by the Embassy on behalf of the consulate in Benghazi were met, except for the guard towers or the -- whatever you want to call them.

Is there anything significant to you, from your perspective, about that formulation? In other words --

A Yes. I believe -- and this may have been -- this may be where some of that talk was coming from -- was, as I said, at the time, there was no ability for Benghazi to send cables, so everything we sent was in an email form. I believe he may have been referring to the fact that only referencing official cables that may have come from Tripoli and not referencing emails that were, in fact, identified by everybody as having the full effect of a cable because it was the only capability for us to send this out. That may be what that terminology is referring to.

Q Thank you.

A Could I add one thing? Because it's relevant --

Q Of course.

A -- to the opening question.

That is, yes, I believe you are accurate that that statement was made, that we fully funded all the requests that were made. But I would bring us back to the comment I made earlier, which was I was told by , "You can't have any of the things that you want. You can only request things that don't cost anything."

So the requests that were made were sort of caveated with, "They can't cost anything." So, yes, things that didn't cost anything were

fully funded.

And by "don't cost anything," I was told minimal, as cheap as you can do it. So, yes, requests that didn't cost anything were fully funded.

Q Relatively de minimis costs would be accepted.

A I was -- yes.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q So the jersey barriers were eventually taken care of. Do you know of anything else, any other requests that didn't cost anything that were granted?

A I did not have personal visibility on when and how they were granted, but I know from my experience in IP that they, in fact, happened.

For example, when I was in Benghazi, there were no escape hatches on any of the villas. So while I was in Benghazi, I requested -- I asked in one of the requests, and I asked for schematics for how to build, sort of, field-expedient escape hatches for the windows.

I know for a fact that those occurred because that's how the special agent who was in the building escaped, was through one of those escape hatched. I can't tell you when and how it was procured. But, again, those are things that can be done for several hundred dollars.

Q Gotcha.

A So, yes, some things like that did, in fact, happen.

And all those requests that we made were good; they were things that we needed. I think some additional fencing and lighting were



done. But a lot of what was done was, there's a right way to do it, and then there was the cheap way that doesn't cost much to do it. And basically all the requests that were made were sort of the cheap and not correct way to do it.

You know, so you may have done this, but it wasn't done the right way, it wasn't done to any standard, you know. But some of them were, in fact, done, to some extent.

Ms. Clarke. So I see that we have reached our hour, so what we will do is go off the record and take a break, and then the minority -- if you all want to take additional time for a break, we will do that. And then we can get into some of the minority questions.

[Recess.]

Ms. Barrineau. All right. We'll go back on the record.

BY MS. BARRINEAU:

Q Did you, during your time -- I know you've talked about some of the decisions Pat Kennedy made. Did you ever have any conversations or videoconferences or anything like that with Pat Kennedy?

A I want to say -- the short answer is I, personally, no.

Q Okay.

A Did we as Mission Benghazi? Yes.

Q Okay.

A I believe it was December 24, Christmas Eve, we were told that Pat Kennedy was going to do a video teleconference with us.

Q Okay.

A I had a discussion the night before with . And,

as the RSO, I should have been in on that discussion. I emailed DS/IP and told them that I would like them to be on the call because I was very concerned about how this call was going to go.

Q Okay.

A And I talked to \_\_\_\_\_, the principal officer, and I told him that I was nervous about the VTC because I was going to directly challenge Pat Kennedy and have some very harsh things to say about physical security at Benghazi. I knew, though, that that was going to get me into hot water and cause me some difficulty.

And he was the principal officer. My allegiance at the time was to him, that I am advising him. So I gave him the option, would you like me to be a part of that VTC? If so, I can't promise I'm not going to go off on Pat Kennedy.

Q Right.

A If you don't want me to, I won't. But I can't promise I'm going to keep my mouth shut.

And \_\_\_\_\_ told me that it might be better for me not to participate in the VTC --

Q Okay.

A -- and that he told me that he would promise to try to bring up the same issues, because he knew what the issues were and what my position was. And he told me if the opportunity came up that he would address those in the VTC.

Q Okay. So did anyone from the RSO shop participate in that VTC?

A Yes. , the ARSO, participated.

Q Okay. What did you understand the purpose, beforehand, the purpose of the VTC to be?

A We were not sure.

Q Okay. Did you find out from either or , after the fact, what was discussed --

A Yes.

Q -- and how that went?

A It was to wish us a merry Christmas and to give us a pat on the back. Nothing substantive was discussed.

Q So there was not even any mention of the security --

A No.

Q -- of the compound.

A No.

Q Okay.

A That's what was told to me by --

Q Right.

A -- Principal Officer and ARSO .

Q But that's what they both told you.

A Yes. They said the opportunity just wasn't there, and Pat Kennedy never even got close to that direction. It was more of just a friendly "merry Christmas" call.

Q Okay.

Let me switch gears a little bit, since you said that you had described this as a suicide mission and that people were going to die.

In the event that you had a chance to evacuate Benghazi, what did you understand the evacuation plan to be, if you had time to do that?

A Save that discussion for later.

Q Okay.

And my last one, and then I will make sure they get to ask theirs.

Are you familiar with tripwires?

A Yes.

Q Did Benghazi have any tripwires?

A Yes.

Q Were you aware of them, as the RSO, during your time there?

A I became aware of them as the RSO during my time there, yes.

Q Were they formal and written down, or were they discussions of things that could go bad?

A They were not formal in the traditional State Department Diplomatic Security sense, as I understand tripwires and that process to be.

Q Right.

A They were done on an individual level by somebody who was in that office. It was just a, you know, Word document that had a couple tripwires and an evac plan.

When I found that document when I became RSO, it was outdated. It --

Q Okay.

A -- was back to when it was a protective detail and a lot of other things were happening. And it had options on there that, when

I called back to the DS/IP, I had been told that those options had been off the table for months.

Q What do you mean, "options"?

A In terms of how we would get out of there -- DOD support, helicopters, ships, et cetera -- that the document we had was still a reference to the reality, you know, from 3 months ago or 4 months ago.

Q So, during your time there, I mean, were any of the tripwires -- once you found the document -- were any of the tripwires crossed?

A The tripwires that I found were sort of irrelevant --

Q Okay.

A -- at that time, just because of the political dynamic. Like I said, they were outdated.

Q So let me ask this. While you were there, did you understand there to be any scenario where, if X happens, we leave?

A No. The tripwires, as they were written, were based upon, my guess, as the revolution was still happening. So if this city falls, then this might happen. And it was based upon not being in a physical compound but being a mobile protective detail around the person.

So they just bore no semblance of reality to where we were and what the tripwires were. It was just an outdated document that really had no function for our facility.

Q Okay.

Ms. Barrineau. I think we're good. We'll go off the record.

[Recess.]

Mr. Woolfork. The time is 12:44.

So, Agent \_\_\_\_\_, again, my name is Brent Woolfork, on the minority staff. I am joined by my colleagues Heather Sawyer and Peter Kenny. And so we're going to try and make this process as easy and straightforward as we can for you.

EXAMINATION

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q First, I kind of have some housecleaning issues in terms of your time in Benghazi. When did you first arrive?

A I don't remember the exact date. It was, I think, just after Thanksgiving. I was supposed to arrive the week before Thanksgiving, but there was a visa holdup.

Q Okay. So sometime around --

A November 20- -- late 20s, something like that.

Q Okay. And when did you leave?

A I believe it was December 31.

Q Okay.

A Just before New Year's.

Q And is it correct that when you first arrived you were the --

A ARSO.

Q -- ARSO?

A Correct.

Q And in your previous postings, you had mentioned you served in both Haiti and South Sudan. What were your roles in those posts?

A So, in Juba, South Sudan, I was a TDY, a 90-day TDY ARSO assisting the -- it was a one-man shop, the RSO who ran the Embassy. STRS at the time was doing a big, sort of, expeditionary diplomacy program out in the, sort of, provinces of South Sudan. So it was too much work for the RSO, who was focused on the Embassy, to focus on. So my main role was to assist him in dealing with that, sort of, outside-of-the-Embassy posture that we had.

Q Okay.

A And then in Haiti I was just sort of -- it was the earthquake. I was just sort of there on the border to make sure nothing bad happened to Americans. So I didn't actually work out of an embassy. It was a very vague type of situation. But it would have been as a TDY ARSO.

Q Okay.

And when you transitioned from ARSO to RSO, how long were you the RSO in Benghazi?

A 10 days.

Q Okay. So it was towards the latter part of your time there?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

Now, during your time in Benghazi, do you recall a threat by Qadhafi regime loyalists that occurred over the holiday period?

A Yes.

Q Could you tell me a little bit about that?

A So there was open-source reporting in a local newspaper that

Benghazi security officials had arrested -- I don't remember the number but a decent number of what were reported to be Qadhafi loyalists who had some vehicle-borne IEDs, RPGs, weapon caches, et cetera, and that when they were arrested they had said that they were going to attack Western oil companies and Western embassies in Benghazi over the holidays, and they were going to call it Operation Papa Noel.

We had no ability to vet that information. So, as the RSO of that facility, I mean, I took it as it was, that this was potentially a real threat, and started to make some preparations for that.

Q And what types of preparations did you start making?

A Primarily, I was asking for MSD support to come from Tripoli to Benghazi.

Q Okay.

And then, once you heard of this threat, did you hold any meetings at post?

A Yeah. We met every day. And, again, at the time, it was only \_\_\_\_\_, the principal officer; myself; and \_\_\_\_\_, the ARSO. So, yes, we held meetings to discuss this.

Q Did you recall holding an Emergency Action Committee?

A I do.

Q Okay. And could you tell me what an Emergency Action Committee meeting is?

A Let me backtrack for a second.

Q Sure.

A We held what we called an Emergency Action Committee. Not



unlike a lot of other things we discussed here, what we had as an Emergency Action Committee was not like what you would have an Emergency Action Committee anywhere else under any other circumstances. An Emergency Action Committee is just -- an EAC and an EAC cable is just the official way that you report threat information in the State Department. So we didn't do anything special.

Typically, in an EAC, you would get all the different relevant department heads at the Embassy, most of whom would not be aware of these issues as they are occurring. You bring them in to convene an EAC to put that on the record as sort of the opinion of the Embassy writ large.

Obviously, at a normal embassy, you might have 50 to 200 Americans working. Here we had four. So there was no real need to elaborate to other people what was happening. This was a discussion we were having 24/7.

So we had a brief discussion. And then, typically, at the end of the EAC, you write up a cable that you send out. And so wrote up an EAC cable and sent it out.

Q Okay. I am going to enter as Exhibit No. 1 a document.

[ Exhibit No. 1  
Was marked for identification.]

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q So this is Exhibit No. 1, which is an email that was forwarded from you on December 23, 2011, to an apparent listserv of DS/IP/NEA. And the document number is C05392213. And it's marked,

"Sensitive but Unclassified."

So I will give you a few moments to take a look at this document.

A Okay.

Q Now, I guess halfway down the page, there's a -- it looks like there would be an initial email that's dated also December 23, and it contains a document then that is, quote, "Benghazi EAC -- December 21, 2011."

And is this the document that you were referring to just a few minutes ago?

A Yes.

Q And did you --

A In terms of the document as being the EAC that would be the official correspondence you would send out regarding any security type of issues.

Q That's correct, yes.

You mentioned that Principal Officer had a role in drafting this; is that right?

A He wrote it.

Q Okay.

A He sent it.

Q Did you have any role in drafting it?

A No.

Q Okay.

A I commented on his -- I mean, we talked informally about it. But I didn't have a role in drafting this.

Q Okay.

Now, the top email mentions there is a listserv DS/IP/NEA. Can you explain what that is?

A Yes. That's DS, International Programs, Near East Affairs. So that would've been the -- was the desk officer for DS/IP/NEA, because within the International Programs Office, which was headed by Deputy Assistant Secretary Charlene Lamb, you would've had DS/IP/NEA, EAP, SCA, WHA for the different regional sections.

So this just would've -- because I believe I just saw the cc list, that it was, like, sent, for example, individually to , was the last person on the cc list, but not to his office writ large. So all I did was forward that on to the office out of protocol.

Q So would you say that this email was widely distributed within at least NEA and Diplomatic Security?

A This email would've been widely distributed amongst anybody that would've been dealing with Benghazi and Libya.

Q Okay.

I wanted to point you down to the second paragraph, which is conveniently labeled paragraph 2. And it says, quote, "On December 21, the Principal Officer (P/O) chaired a meeting of Mission Benghazi's core Emergency Action Committee (EAC). RSO and IMO also attended the meeting," end quote.

And you attended this meeting? Is that what you said earlier?

A Yes.

Q And did any -- you mentioned the RSO but also an IMO. What is the IMO?

A IMO is information management officer, who was . I believe he was a TDY IMO out of Cairo. So he came in there for however many -- 4, 6, 8 weeks -- his appointment was going to be.

Q Okay.

And you mentioned that Mr. had drafted the document. But does this document accurately reflect, to your understanding, the discussions that occurred during that particular EAC?

A No.

Q Okay. And what were some of the issues in here that you don't see that were accurately reflected?

A The EAC document does not accurately reflect the threat information, how vulnerable we were, and what our real needs for security were at the time. And the document identifies some of the concerns, but it doesn't explain them in very good detail, and it sort of soft-pedals them a little bit in this document.

Q And in terms of the disagreements, I guess, in that they weren't reflected, I guess, how did those discussions, I guess, unveil themselves during the course of this meeting?

A So there were no disagreements during our discussion. Everybody was on the same page.

When submitted this, I read it and told I didn't think it was a very good description of our concerns and our impression of Benghazi. And he told me, I know, but if I said anything more harsh

than this, it won't be accepted.

Q     Okay.

A     So this is as harsh a language as I can use and have it still be accepted by the State Department.

Q     Now, in terms of your concerns, you had mentioned earlier your repeated requests to make physical security improvements at the compound. Were those some of the issues that you felt that were not adequately reflected in this document?

A     Yes. And some of this is intentional. It's done to try to get what little we can get.

When I would send -- first of all, again, I was told that you can't have the physical security requirements that you want because there's no money to pay for them, but go ahead and submit some physical security requirements that are field-expedient, can be done very cheaply and quickly, and we'll try to get those funded.

Now, those emails, though, go through the, sort of, you know, DS/IP chain or through some of those specific offices that have funding. What assists people in making those decisions is when you have an EAC, which is something that goes out department-wide, as, sort of, rationale and justification.

So you will see in the document, there are some references to -- paragraph 4, you know, fourth line, "discussed a range of other additional, relatively low-cost security enhancements that should be made in the immediate term while the contraction of the Mission's footprint is considered in Washington."

This would be, sort of, contemporaneous with emails that we're sending to individual offices saying, we're trying to get funding for these relatively low-cost, temporary fixes that we could do. So the goal of putting that in there would be giving that office some sort of cover, that if they were asked, why did you give Benghazi money for this, they can say, if you look at the EAC, they asked for some of these improvements.

So this reflected some of the requests that we made after having been told, you can't have the request that you want. So I think

was trying to marry them up just to get approval for the little bit of funding that we were trying to realistically get.

Q Okay.

Now, as followup, I wanted to specifically get to some of the items, because some of them you had previously mentioned.

In paragraph 4, which you pointed to, it reads, "The EAC also discussed the pending request to condense the Mission's facility space and make related security enhancements, including improvements to the perimeter walls and emplacement of jersey barriers and/or drop arms at Mission gates."

And before getting to those, I actually want to kind of talk about some of the basics, kind of delve a little bit more into the basics of the compound itself. You had mentioned earlier that the compound was essentially residential villas. Is that correct?

A Yes.

Q And how were those villas, I guess, divided? Did you have

names for them?

A Yes. They were Villa A, B, and C when I was there.

Q Okay.

A Villa A, I believe -- and they're not backwards -- Villa A was eventually dropped.

Q Okay.

A So, yeah, there were three villas, A, B, and C.

Q And were you -- you said they were dropped while you were there?

A The discussion to drop was being done and made while I was there.

Q Okay.

A But while I was there, we had all three villas.

Q And were you involved in the process of making a decision on where the mission would continue in terms of its physical presence?

Ms. Krawiec. Please, can you clarify your question?

Mr. Woolfork. Sure.

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q Did you have a role in the discussions that were taking place in Benghazi regarding the physical location of the mission?

A Discussions regarding the present and future physical location of the mission were done sort of informally. And, to some extent, yes, again, because we were such a small mission, that, yes, I was part of those discussions.

And we had a TDY facilities maintenance guy come from Tripoli who

also did some work to look at potential options, and I would accompany him on those trips to look at some of the properties.

Q Can you recall that individual's name?

A .

Q Was it ?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And you just said that you accompanied him to some of those facilities?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And do you recall what, I guess, the options were in terms of those facilities?

A Yes.

Q Could you describe what those are?

A One I could describe later.

Q Okay. Or the ones that you can describe in this setting.

A Yeah. Nothing special other than other residential houses that they looked at. There was absolutely nothing remarkable about them. We looked at one other house, did a quick inspection, and determined that it was not going to work.

Q Not going to work in what way?

A In any way. There was just not a security structure. It was just, yeah, not going to work.

Q And from a security perspective, were there any concerns?

A There were security concerns about every single facility, yeah.



Q     Okay.

A     Yes.

Q     But, I guess, given -- in Benghazi, did you see that there were limited options in terms of suitable facilities?

A     Yes.

Q     Okay. And so in terms of -- you said there were issues with, kind of, everything, including security. What did you find in terms of other facilities that you visited?

A     We looked at one other one I'll discuss in more detail later. But, I mean, more generally speaking, everything that we looked at -- and this was just always where we were on everything in Benghazi. If you went with this option because it gave you this, then you started to give up something else. So if you went with another option to get this, then you gave up something else.

So nothing gave you what you needed. Something might be better in one respect, but then it would be worse in another respect. So there was no way to find something that met all of our needs.

Q     Okay.

And you said that eventually Villa A was dropped.

A     Yes.

Q     Does that mean that the mission remained in the compound just with Villas B and C?

A     Yes.

Q     Okay. Do you have any insight in terms of why Villa A was dropped?

A Simply because, you know, with one, two, three agents, we just literally couldn't physically be there.

Q Okay.

A It was better just to board it up, I think, and get rid of it.

Q Okay.

I just want to point you to paragraph 3 in the EAC. And paragraph 3 starts, quote, "The EAC agreed that all COM personnel should be housed only in Villas B and C until the next EAC is held. With the current threat and the depleted number of security personnel currently at the Mission, it is not possible to provide adequate security for COM personnel in all three villas on the compound on a round-the-clock basis," end quote.

Now, the threat that's mentioned here, was that the threat you had discussed earlier that occurred over the holidays?

A Yes.

Q And what does "COM" stand for?

A Chief of mission.

Q Okay. That would represent all the Americans that were at the compound?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

And so the decision here was to -- at least due to this threat -- drop Villa A, at least on a temporary basis, and then consolidate at Villas B and C. Is that right?

A Yes.

The three different villas each had a primary building on it. So Villa A was, you know, a house on a compound. The wall had been knocked down to link it with Villa B, which had the office space which was the tactical operations center and the cafeteria. And then there was another wall that was knocked down, and that was where you had the other residential compound where the fire started and where the two lives were lost. And also on that same compound was the February 17th Martyrs Brigade building.

So when there were three of us, we would have one person in Villa A, one person in the tactical operations center at night sleeping through the night, and then the third agent would be in the Villa C residential compound with the principal officer and the IMO. So that way, we at least had one person in each compound if something happened.

But even at that level, each compound was about, you know, a 3- or 4-acre size compound. So when I would sleep at night, I was by myself in a 3-story house on a 4-acre compound -- no other support, with just a narrow hall between somebody else. And any one of us could've been attacked from either side.

So, obviously, with only two agents, we couldn't cover all three compounds. So we just decided to temporarily give up A, just consolidate to B and C. And I believe the final decision was permanently just to give up A.

Q And so, from a security perspective, based on the reasons you just outlined, did it make sense in the decision that basically -- to

drop Villa A, in your opinion, to drop Villa A on a long-term basis?

A These were discussions that we had, and there were no concrete answers. It depended on what happened.

And we would talk these things through, that with the three villas and two agents, we literally had part of our compound that we had no eyes on, other than, like, one or two unarmed local guards. So that is obviously a major concern.

On the other hand, giving up Villa A took away a potential egress route for us to get out, because we lost an exit and we lost a wall to go over. So, you know, it was one of those "damned if you do, damned if you don't." We were boxing ourselves in, making ourselves a smaller, more compact target with fewer options to escape, but we were at least giving ourselves better visibility on everything.

And, I mean, we talked about these things. So giving up Villa A was a good idea under certain circumstances, and it could be a bad idea under others, and there was no way to look into a crystal ball and guess. But we made the decision to go towards dropping it just because we didn't like the inability to have anybody in that whole compound for long periods of time.

Q Okay.

Now, in terms of the sentence -- this is, again, at the beginning of paragraph 4. We just discussed the first part of that sentence. The latter part regards, "make related security enhancements, including improvements to the perimeter walls and emplacement of jersey barriers" --

Mr. Craig. I'm sorry. Can you tell me where you are? Because I'm --

Mr. Woolfolk. Yes, sir. In paragraph 4, on the first page, the bottom two lines.

Mr. Craig. The first sentence. Okay.

BY MR. WOOLFORK:

Q And then that continues onto the second page, "and/or drop arms at Mission gates."

Now, you discussed earlier -- and, as you see, we're just going to walk you through this document -- the concerns that you had raised regarding these specific requests. And so you mentioned earlier that jersey barriers and drop arms were part of a later request that you made. Is that correct?

A This was December 21. The discussions were already in place. And I don't remember the date that the actual list came out, like, as a formal list, "Please do all these." Some of those had come out individually by then. It's all in the space of the same week.

But, yes. So some of these same security requests are the same requests that are in that list that we made for field-expedient chief recommendations.

Q And you mentioned that list was sent via email towards the end of your time in Benghazi. Is that right?

A Yes.

Q And then it was resent at some point after you left?

A Yes.

Q And, again, who sent, I guess, that followup?

A --

Q Okay.

A -- who was my ARSO, who then became the RSO.

Q Okay.

That paragraph continues, "The EAC discussed moving-up the timeline for implementing some of these enhancements, and discussed a range of other additional, relatively low-cost security enhancements that should be made in the immediate term while the contraction of the Mission's footprint is considered in Washington."

Now, in terms of, I guess, moving up the timeline -- so it sounds like you had discussions regarding these requests but, due to the threat, made a decision to just expedite those requests. Is that correct?

A No. That was diplo talk for, "You guys need to expedite funding these, because we made the request, we're not getting traction."

So post had decided to move up. Our decision is we need these things done sooner rather than later. And, again, that's supposed to hopefully give somebody cover back in D.C. that, hey, post is hinting strongly that they need this done now. That's what that language was for.

Q And, I guess, when you referred to "you," "you" would be -- who would be referred to as encapsulated by "you"?

A Could you give me the sentence again?

Q Sure. Well, in terms of how you said, like, this is diplo talk for "you" expediting your request.

A "You," meaning whoever the recipient of the -- whoever the request has been made to.

Q Okay. And, in this case, the request was made to whom?

A You would have to individually look at each of the different requests that were out there. Like I said, this would go out department-wide.

So if I had requested, again, guard booths from the local guard force program, the person who was in charge of that funding could look to this and say, hey, this is the official document coming out of Benghazi, that they're, you know, pushing this to happen sooner rather than later.

So, ideally, that's to try to marry this up with the request that we've sent directly to them so that they can go to their chain of command and say, you know, we've got to make this happen.

Because this makes it official department-wide. This other stuff we were doing is, you know, office-specific. And, oftentimes, that is enough, but this just helps give you a little more juice in getting that done.

Q Earlier, you indicated that in addition to emails you had also had phone calls. In, like, this particular case, would you have had phone calls regarding expediting the physical security requests?

A Yes. There's nothing in here that was not discussed in these phone calls and emails that were, again, flying out in the days

prior, the day of, and the days right after this. This is just sort of an overlay of some of those to kind of go along with that.

Q And with whom would some of those phone calls have occurred?

A A majority of the phone calls would've been with [redacted], simply because, again, he ran the Benghazi, sort of, portfolio for DS/IP. So he had his fingers in everybody's office; he knew who everybody was. Us at post did not. So most of the requests went through him.

Some people I reached out directly to. [redacted] is somebody who rings a bell. I believe he's from DS/MSG, Marine Security Guard program. Because I had some conversations with him by phone about some of these security requests. And [redacted], as well. But the majority of them went through [redacted].

Q It sounds like you talked to [redacted] -- Mr. [redacted] a number of times, I guess --

A Daily.

Q -- on a daily basis. And during those conversations, particularly on the physical security requests, what did he relay to you?

A That he and everybody else back there knew exactly what our security situation was and they knew how bad it was and they were sorry but it just -- we were going to have to deal with it.

Q Okay.

A And he said, in good faith, I'm going to try to get you what I can, but it's not going to be very much. I'll try. So you do your



best by, you know, sending these emails out and do what you can, and I'll do my best on this end, but don't expect very much.

Q You had mentioned that Mr. [REDACTED] was in DS, Diplomatic Security, International Programs.

A And then specifically NEA, desk officer.

Q NEA, desk officer.

I guess, what -- once you had spoken with him on the phone, I guess, where would that information have gone from Mr. [REDACTED], as far as the reporting chain, so to speak?

A Reporting chain for him would've been directly to [REDACTED], who was the regional director for DS/NEA, IP/NEA. And then above [REDACTED], it would've been Charlene Lamb, who is the Deputy Assistant Secretary for International Programs.

That would've been the chain of command from Benghazi up through DS/IP. Where it would've gone, sort of, you know, horizontally, you'd have to ask [REDACTED].

Q Okay.

And in terms of your discussions with Mr. [REDACTED], did he relay any of his conversations -- like, specific conversations he had regarding these requests, you know, whether it was with Mr. [REDACTED] or Deputy Assistant Secretary Lamb?

A You're talking about in terms of funding?

Q Yes, sir.

A In terms of funding, the only person that he referenced at the time was Pat Kennedy and his rule of, you know, not funding Benghazi

overall.

In terms of funding issues for programmatic stuff and security upgrades, he just said, you're not going to get the money because Pat Kennedy hasn't given you guys any money. So there's no money at all that exists for the security budget for Benghazi. Every single penny you get we have to take from some other operational budget from some other office somewhere.

Q Okay.

Now, I'm going to jump back, actually, to the first page. Because earlier in our conversation, over the last hour or so, you had talked about the need for, I guess -- was it additional agents to be sent to Benghazi? Is that right?

A Yes.

Q And, I guess, what types of agents would have been sent or were you hoping to have sent?

A Well, there were agents coming that were going to come from two possibilities. One were more TDY ARSOs that could come from anywhere, agents such as myself. The agents most likely to get there and more realistic would've been MSD, Mobile Security Deployment, special agents, I think three or four teams of which were in Tripoli.

So I was hoping to get some portion of those agents to come down for some periods of time to Benghazi to both provide us with some quick additional security but also to get more eyes on Benghazi, to get further assessments, also to get the word out about Benghazi because they would take that back.

Q And how are MSD agents different from a typical agent?

A So MSD agents, they serve a 3-year tour. The first 7 or 8 months or so is spent in training, and it's, you know, some of the best training in Federal law enforcement. And they specialize in -- they typically operate in a five-man team that trains together, always deploys together. And they're typically deployed 6 to 9 months out of the year. They typically go to hotspots.

So Benghazi is the perfect situation for MSD teams, although they were never, in this case, sent to Benghazi.

Q Okay.

So I just want to -- this is, perhaps, a precursor to them not being sent. This is in paragraph 3, probably about three-fourths down the paragraph. The sentence reads, quote, "The EAC also recommended that RSO Tripoli provide Mission Benghazi two TDY MSD agents for additional security support over the Christmas and New Year's holidays," end quote.

Was this the precursor to, I guess, your request to have those MSD agents sent out? Or the request had already been made?

A The request would've already been made, and no response was forthcoming.

Q Okay.

Now, you'd just said that the MSD agents did not come. And so, earlier, you had said that, at this point, I guess -- this is December 21 2011, so when the EAC was conducted -- that there were two DS agents, you and Mr. . Is that correct?

A , yes.

Q Okay. And then you left towards the end of December?

A Just before New Year's.

Q Okay. Which left Mr. as the lone DS agent, correct?

A Yes.

Q Okay.

And then there were supposed to be two additional agents that were not MSD that were supposed to take both of your places?

A Yeah. So let me just back up.

Benghazi was being staffed by TDY ARSO special agents. So announcements went out; people just volunteered. So there was no set thing. Some people come for 4 weeks, 6 weeks, 8 weeks, 12 weeks, depending on their schedule and what they could do.

So, as and I were supposed to leave, there was another group of agents that were going to be coming in. Their logistics were being delayed. So, again, it was looking like when we were set to depart there was nobody that was going to -- they were not going to be there on time to replace us.

Q And then, earlier, you had referenced a December 28 email regarding, I guess, an evacuation plan or what the options would have been if none of those agents could come. Is that right?

A Yes.

Q Okay. And so, to your knowledge, do you know if those agents did arrive?

A I don't think they did, because at the last minute

volunteered to remain --

Q     Okay.

A     -- and I think that took away the impetus for MSD to send those two agents.

If I could back up just a second to put this in context?

Q     Sure. Yeah.

A     This is where we get back to that distinction between, you know, repercussions of going with a nondiplomatic facility, and we talked about having physical security standards requirements versus not having any.

I know for a fact from verbal conversations with the MSD team commander in Tripoli that the rationale for not sending us MSD agents was that the 18 MSD agents who were in Tripoli were too busy training local staff from -- they were actually working operationally every day to escort people and provide security, but they were also providing training for LES, locally engaged staff, who were drivers, bodyguards, et cetera.

The, sort of, benefit to being an official diplomatic facility, such as the Embassy in Tripoli, is that everything that they do in terms of training local staff, in terms of writing an emergency action plan, all these things count towards fulfilling the requirements that are required by the FAM. So anything that's done for Benghazi, because we don't have any requirements, is -- I mean, I hate to say it, but it doesn't count for anything. We needed it to keep people alive, but it didn't check any box, it didn't fulfill any requirement.

So all you would do by sending people from Tripoli is train fewer local staff, train fewer drivers in Tripoli, take longer to check all your boxes and meet all your requirements there to provide us some help there. And that was part of the calculus, that Tripoli didn't want to give up -- or the Department didn't want to give up the agents in Tripoli to just sort of -- I hate to say it, but sort of to waste them on Benghazi.

Q You said earlier -- this is December 28 -- that there could've been just no agents on the ground, right --

A Yes.

Q -- unless two other agents had come into place?

A Unless anybody had come.

Q Okay. Those two agents that were scheduled to come in, do you know if they ended up coming before you resulted in having no agents on the ground?

A I don't believe we ever got to -- no, we never got to zero agents, because extended.

Q Okay.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q If I could, I just had a few questions for you. Because I think you're doing a great job explaining some of the particularized frustrations about particularized requests and the dynamic around staffing. And we do want to have the opportunity, as well, to ask you about -- we know that you spoke with the Accountability Review Board and the extent to which their findings reflect your experience. So

I want us to be able to get to that.

But one of the things that I would like your help in trying to understand is the dynamic that you've articulated a number of times in different ways, and that is a dynamic whereby -- and this is, to me, a perfect example.

You described this as a EAC cable that is the post's opportunity to put on the record to people who wouldn't know about incidents those incidents and that it is broadly distributed department-wide. At the same time, you explained that you soft-pedaled in that EAC the seriousness of the incidents as well as the actual requests for security.

So with regard to that broader group of people, how would you have expected them to understand the seriousness of the incidents?

A     You would have to ask                   .                   wrote that email. Those are, you know, his words. And when I told him that I didn't feel that accurately reflected the discussions we had in the EAC, again, he told me that this was as harsh a language as I can use in the State Department to send out on EAC. It's just not acceptable to say anything that's more harsh.

You would have to ask him to explain. You know, I have my opinions generally about what that is, because I have written EACs at other posts. But when you send out an EAC, because it goes out department-wide, you have to take into consideration every equity at post, in Benghazi, in Tripoli, in D.C. All those equities come into play, and you don't want to do anything that's going to upset any of

those higher-level equities. So you kind of get some generalized information that goes out.

Q So, in this instance, Mr. explained it that this is as harsh a language I can use. So it was his decision in this individual instance.

Did he indicate to you that someone had directed him to soft-pedal --

A No.

Q -- the seriousness?

Did you yourself, given that you disagreed with this as not accurately portraying the seriousness of the incidents, did you yourself -- I mean, you forwarded it without comment to an even broader group of people. To the extent you thought it was not accurate or serious enough, what concrete steps did you take to cure that misperception?

A First of all, it's not a broader group. That's a very narrow group, and that is --

Q My apologies. You forwarded it on to a smaller group.

A A smaller group who would've been in receipt of all the other specific things that we had.

And the only reason I forwarded it to them is because I think just didn't understand how our office was structured. So, by only emailing it to , he left out superiors. So, by them not getting it, that might reflect badly on . So I forwarded it to his whole office. That way, everyone would get it.



Q So then you forward this email. You didn't think it accurately captured the seriousness of the incident.

What concrete steps did you then take, beyond forwarding it to the folks that you felt also needed to have it, to make sure they did understand the seriousness, that this wasn't accurate, that they needed to know more?

A They would've -- and like I said -- I'll go back. This document was happening at the same time as these same phone calls about these same issues and other emails that are occurring. So this is not a, "This document happened now; what are we doing about it?" This was just simultaneous with all these other requests. We were told to put an EAC out, just to put it in that form.

So the concerns I had about that would've been expressed and all the emails that I was sending to \_\_\_\_\_ and DS/IP/NEA and all the phone calls I was having with him explaining to him our dire situation --

Q Okay. So let's just stop about the emails for just a second.

A Yeah.

Q So, earlier, when you were talking to our colleagues, you said that you also in email could not fully express the direness of the security situation.

So, we have a lot of your emails. Are those also inaccurate in terms of --

A They're soft-pedaled, yes.

Q Okay. So if they're getting a soft-pedaled email and a soft-pedaled cable, where is the actual seriousness of the incidents being conveyed to them, and how?

A For Benghazi, it's verbally. It's in verbal meetings.

Q And tell me who those verbal meetings are with.

A Done in Benghazi amongst everybody who was there. And then for myself, it would've been primarily with .

Q Okay. And these folks, do you believe that their recollection of how you've portrayed it to us will be consistent with yours? If Mr. has talked to congressional committees, would you expect for him to have portrayed the story in a way that is consistent with how you have?

A I can't speculate on how he would've portrayed the nature or the language of some of these conversations. I know that there is a -- within Diplomatic Security, we are always concerned about, if we speak out too loudly, we have to worry about retaliation and we have to worry about actions being taken against us for embarrassing our superiors if what we say is not consistent with what they want us to say.

Q So how is that -- I do want to get to that, too, because that is a concern. It's a concern of Congress. We don't want people to be penalized when they're trying to do the right thing. So I do want to get to that, as well.

But it is, I think -- you know, you've relayed a number of conversations directly with where you have said very

specific things. And I just want to make sure we have accurately understood and when those things occurred so we can ask him about them, as needed, with enough specificity so that he can remember them.

So you have said a couple of times that he relayed to you that, " , you can't have anything you want. Pat Kennedy is not going to give you any money for Benghazi." When did those conversations occur? When did he tell you that?

And -- let's just start there.

A I couldn't tell you the exact day. I was RSO approximately December 19 until the 30th or 31st.

Both and I were sitting on a lot of ideas and proposals that we wanted to push up the chain that weren't being pushed immediately prior to me becoming the RSO. So, as soon as I became RSO, we started pushing out these requests. And it would have been within a couple days of that, when I would have started to feel some frustration or pushback or not get an answer --

Q That you weren't getting traction.

A -- that I would've confronted with, "What is going on here?" And that's when he told me that.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So that conversation would have at least occurred during your time in Benghazi.

A Yes.

Q Okay. And was Mr. party to these conversations?

A I couldn't remember with each one. It was a small compound, and very often he would've been in the same room, so he would've been listening to these conversations. And he would've been part of the discussions we had informally amongst ourselves in Benghazi. So, to some extent, yes.

Q Okay.

You also said that you relayed, because of your concerns, that -- you know, and, understand, we don't doubt the seriousness of your concern -- your belief that it was a suicide mission and that everyone was going to die. And you said that Mr. --

Ms. Krawiec. Sorry.

Did you say that?

Ms. Sawyer. Yes.

Mr. . I may have said that in earlier testimony.

Ms. Sawyer. Yeah. Put it however you --

Ms. Krawiec. You said that or someone said that?

Ms. Sawyer. He had testified he did. But, please, clarify. It wasn't me that said that.

Ms. Krawiec. Can we go back to the testimony?

Ms. Sawyer. Well, we don't need to. I don't want to put words in your mouth.

Ms. Krawiec. I just want to make sure the record is correct on that.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q There was a conversation about someone describing the mission in Benghazi as a suicide mission.

A Yeah --

Q Was that you, or was that someone else?

A Yeah, that would've been something I would've said, yes.

Q Okay. And you said that his response was, "Everyone knows this." I think the first time you said, "And no one cares." But he said, "Everyone knows this."

A He said, "Everyone in D.C. knows that people are going to die in Benghazi, and nobody here cares."

Q Okay. And so when did that conversation occur?

A That would've been early in my RSO tenure for that 10 days.

Q Okay. And did he identify any single person in the "everyone in D.C. knows"?

A He did not.

Q So he didn't mention Pat Kennedy's name?

A Nope. He did not -- no.

Q He didn't mention Charlene Lamb's name?

A Not in that immediate conversation, no.

Q Did he mention name?

A No.

He would have mentioned, for example -- Charlene Lamb's name would have been mentioned in the context of -- I think in that same conversation: Everybody in D.C. knows something is going to happen in Benghazi. Nobody cares. No one is going to care until they die. You know, save the emails for the ARB.

And when I'm pressing on, you know, our physical security lack and the lack of agents, that's when he would have told me, hey, Charlene Lamb said you're never going to have more than three agents. Stop asking. You're just never going to get it. This has been told to me in no uncertain terms.

Q Okay.

So put this together for me. If everyone knows, but the broad distribution of information on incidents and information about what you're actually requesting security-wise is not included in either the emails, which are soft-pedaled, and the EAC cables or more broadly distributed communications, from your perspective, how is it that everyone knows this?

A I couldn't answer. That's what told me. I couldn't tell you how everyone knows. He tells me these -- everybody is aware of how bad the security situation is in Benghazi. Nothing that I'm saying is news to anybody.

You would have to ask him how he knows that information.

Q Uh-huh.

So with regard to his statements, I think you described it as Pat Kennedy has a rule -- you used the term "rule" -- that there would be no funding for Benghazi.

A I don't think I used the term "rule."

Q Okay. With regard to Pat Kennedy, how would you describe -- and give us, again, the basis of your understanding that Pat Kennedy would not provide funding for Benghazi.

A So, at the time, my understanding was direct from that, because of Pat Kennedy -- and we knew about the memo that was flowing through at the time, that Pat Kennedy was the decisionmaker on Benghazi, that he was the guy who was deciding everything -- there is no budget for Benghazi, there is no money.

And, again, subsequent to this -- I didn't know this at the time. I saw this later back in IP when I became more aware of the background on this issue from IP.

Q Uh-huh.

A I think the Kennedy memo was signed on December 27. I believe on December 23 DS approved the memo to go forward on Benghazi, you know, the -- I forget the name, but the action memo to Kennedy. And the DS approval, official approval, was, you know, Acting PDAS, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, approves the action memo to extend Benghazi for another year but confirms that this is an unfunded mandate and continues to be a drain on personnel resources.

So the official approval, I learned at a later date from DS, was that Benghazi writ large is an unfunded mandate and a drain on personnel resources. And then what followed from December 23 when that went out was being told that Pat Kennedy has given us no budget, there's no money, and we can't get enough bodies.

So, initially, I was told informally by \_\_\_\_\_, and later I saw where it was actually identified as an unfunded mandate, prior to being signed by Pat Kennedy, and a drain on personnel resources.

Q And do you recall who -- with regard to the action memo, you had previously indicated -- and I just want to confirm that you had not been involved in that process at all, that you hadn't been involved in the drafting of it or the reviewing of it or the approving of that action memo that went up to Mr. Kennedy for his signature. Is that accurate?

A Officially, that is correct. We snuck in one edit.

Q And what edit was that?

A The, I believe it was the second paragraph of the action memo says that there should be five Diplomatic Security agents in Benghazi, but currently there are only three -- originally, it was, "Currently, there are only three of five DS agent positions filled due to lack of funding and the desire to have a smaller footprint. Because there were two of us, \_\_\_\_\_ and I decided to edit that to "two of five" DS agents are currently in Benghazi. We were not asked or told to provide edits or anything else, but \_\_\_\_\_ kind of snuck that in as he saw it in the email chain.



Q So that accurately reflected the fact that you had not gotten the recommended five?

A So the memo, I believe, as signed, yes, accurately reflected the fact that we were at 40 percent of the required security staffing, yes.

Q And was there any retaliation against Mr. for sneaking that into the memo?

A For that, I'm not aware of. You'd have to ask .

Q Okay.

A But it was already in, three of five, changing to two of five. So I don't think that would have been seen as inflammatory or -- but you would have to ask .

Q Okay.

So with regard to another thing that I'm just trying to grapple with and understand -- so the dynamic between you and Mr. -- one of the things you indicated, that when you raised with him the concerns about it being a suicide mission -- and you've already explained that he didn't identify anyone in the "everyone knows"; he just said it -- he also instructed you to keep your emails because there would be an ARB. So, certainly, he never instructed you to destroy anything?

A No.

Q Did he ever instruct you to, kind of, cover anything up?

A , absolutely not.

And my impression of was he was very angry at the way Benghazi was being run. So I took his advice as trying to help

me and understand how the situation was in Benghazi.

Q So if the anticipation back in December of 2011 was that you would want emails that accurately reflected what the problems were, so that an ARB could have an accurate assessment -- and we'll get to the ARB, because I do think the ARB identified and saw some of the very real problems that you were experiencing -- how is it that emails that are soft-pedaling and not telling the truth -- I'm just trying to understand that directive. Like, save your emails, but your emails don't accurately reflect from your perspective what people were being told.

A No, they don't necessarily reflect the severity of the concern. I think if you read the emails, I think they do accurately reflect the security concerns that we have.

And I, at that time, was faced with being in a difficult position. Again, I was an untenured 4 special agent, which means I was told, "You have zero job security." The other problem I'm faced with -- and also told that if you send emails that accurately reflect your opinion, you will be -- you will probably be gone. This is somebody speaking --

Q So let's talk about that.

A Yeah.

Q Who told you that? That's an important -- I mean, that's where I'm saying, like, obviously, we want the record to accurately reflect both for an ARB and for Congress. So if you're being told that --

A clearly gave me the impression that, if I sent

anything that was too dramatic, I would be facing repercussions from Charlene Lamb.

Q Okay. So he was very specific that -- it was who told you that if --

A And I also had warn me that you are, in fact, an untenured agent; you need to be very careful about things you put in emails to the State Department.

Q And where, from his perspective, did the threat come? Did he explain that to you?

A ?

Q I'm sorry. But he was saying you will potentially suffer repercussions. Did he identify who was going to mete out those?

A No.

Mr. Craig. Who is the "he" in this?

Ms. Sawyer. Mr. .

Mr. . No.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q So he didn't identify. So it was a vague --

A It was vague. And I take this -- I mean, the way I took this was, I'm an untenured junior agent, sort of, doing some things for the first time. He's an office director senior person who has a lot of experience in the Department. I didn't feel the need to press him. I feel advice coming from someone like that, and I trusted him as a person from our work together, so I trusted that advice.

Q So aside from Mr.                      and Mr.                      , did anyone ever convey to you that you might risk some sort of negative, what do they call it in the legal world, adverse employment action, retaliation, if you were more forthcoming about your concerns?

A That would have been from                      -- I'm sorry, from

.

Q                      .

A And then --

Q                      .

A                      .

Q No one else?

A I didn't really have contact with many other people.

Q So some people would have -- I'm not saying that you

did -- but some people would have, with those concerns -- and kind of obviously you had very serious concerns -- and also recognizing your feeling that it wasn't being accurately conveyed, did you take any steps to really either, for yourself, kind of record what you believe tells the kind of accurate story as to where you were feeling the stumbling blocks, or did you reach out to anyone other than Mr. [redacted] to truly express the seriousness, contemporaneously. We'll talk about your opportunity to talk to the ARB.

A     Contemporaneous, I recall I sent an email to [redacted], who subsequently would be the RSO in Tripoli. I don't recall where he was at the time, but he had been the RSO in Juba, South Sudan, when I was the ARSO. I emailed him because I needed to send a request, and I had never done so before, a request for funding for security upgrades. I sent an email to him indicating how bad things were in Benghazi. And I do not recall at the time if I knew he was going to go to Tripoli at that time as the RSO or not. I can't recall at what point I learned that.

So I sent an email to him saying, in probably some of that exact language, this is a suicide mission, people are going to die, I've got to get some -- I'm desperate to get some money for funding here, can you help me out in terms of navigating State, because what I'm doing right now is not working. So he sent me a template of some requests that he had made while he was in Pakistan requesting security upgrades of a similar nature, so I at least had that as a template.

Q     And did you follow his recommendations?

A Yes.

Q Did they help at all?

A I can't speak to follow-up on that. I was there for a short period, so I didn't necessarily see the follow-up.

I would like to say, and this is -- it's a fair question, and the situation I found myself in is, I was being told that people back in D.C. were doing things with their emails to practice -- I was told this -- CYA, that Benghazi at that point was CYA. It's just my personal nature, I don't practice CYA, I'm not going to do that.

So in hindsight, having worked now longer at the State Department, I probably should have written memo to self and done that. And I didn't expect that the aftermath of Benghazi would work out the way it was done in terms of the lack of investigative procedures and lack of transparency and lack of, you know, effectiveness of subsequent investigations. I did not see that coming.

Q Well, we will get to that in a moment.

A Yes.

Q But tell me, who told you that Benghazi is now CYA?

A That would have been in a discussion with .

Q So that was also still the discussion while you were still in Benghazi?

A Yeah, everyone back here in D.C. is practicing CYA on this. And the clear message to me was -- and, again, nobody knows it's going to end with people dying because that's crystal ball, but it was a very real expectation that a lot of people had because it was conveyed to

me that Benghazi being attacked and people dying was a very likely scenario and that people were already sort of preparing what they were saying now for that eventuality.

Q Okay. And, again, that conversation?

A .

Q , okay.

A I would also add that, I mean, and I worked together, so there was an element of trust. So I can't speak to what level of frankness would have had with a previous ARSO or with a subsequent ARSO or RSO. But we had a working relationship, we trusted each other, so we had very frank discussions.

Q Right. Well, tell me this, when you would convey -- did you share with, for example, that you felt you couldn't be honest in emails?

A Yes.

Q Had he heard the same thing from Mr. ?

A -- sorry, typically was not having conversations with as often as I was, and he didn't have a personal relationship with , they had never met. And , you know, didn't work in the same office that I did, so he wouldn't have had any visibility on how things were working at that level. You would have to ask about that.

I would also backtrack a little bit to add something else. The RSO before me was . So also where I got some of this sense was was the RSO before me. He was a 2, so he

is much more senior than I am, has been around for quite a while.

Both [redacted] and I -- well, I'll speak for myself. I felt that we were not really taking any proactive measures at all trying to get additional security resources in the period that I had gotten there that [redacted] was the RSO. I asked directly [redacted] why aren't we doing more.

[redacted] told me that he had met with Charlene Lamb before coming out there as RSO, and Charlene Lamb made it very clear to him that it was his job to not make any waves, that the decision to be there had been made from way above the State Department, and nothing you say as the RSO is going to have any impact on, you know, what this mission does. It is what it is. And he said, I've been around the State Department long enough to know that when I get that information, I'm not going to make any waves.

And that's why when I became the RSO, both [redacted] and I started, again, this flurry of requests.

Q So tell me this, Mr. [redacted] relayed this to you directly?

A Yes.

Q And that occurred when?

A At some point between the end of November and December 19 [redacted] or so when I took over. At some point we became very frustrated at our lack of movement or pushing back, and that's when [redacted] told me that, you know, it was made very clear to him when he came out here that his job was not to make any waves, and he wasn't planning on making any.



Q And he told you who had conveyed that to him?

A He said he was told that by Charlene Lamb.

Q Embedded in that you said that he said that Charlene Lamb said the decision to be there, presumably Benghazi, had been made way above at the State Department.

A This was paraphrasing. But, yeah, that this decision to be in Benghazi was made at a very high level, and nobody was asking for our opinion, nobody cared what we thought, that this was just going to happen.

Q Did he identify who --

A No.

Q -- at the high level?

A No.

Q Did you ever hear, independent of that conversation, that someone at a high level -- you, yourself, directly -- did you hear directly from someone at a high level that they had approved this and that that's why we were in Benghazi?

A Yes. Well, not phrased the way you said it exactly. Would you like me to address that comment?

Q Sure.

A Will you specify what comment, just for the record?

Q You had just indicated that the decision to be in Benghazi had been made at high levels of the State Department. And then I asked, did you ever hear that directly from anyone in a high level at the State Department?

A No, I have never heard that from anyone at a high level at the State Department because I didn't have any contact with people at a high level in the State Department. I was told by that -- again, I was told by directly that the decision to be there is coming down from -- and I believe, this is my recollection, this is above the State Department, so there is really no discussion about should we be here, how safe is it to be here, what we're doing here, that this is just a done deal, that we're going to be here. So --

Q So what is above the State Department?

A You would have to ask .

Q Okay. We only have a few more minutes, and then we'll break for lunch. And I know I've been pressing you hard, but we are just trying to get a real grapple on kind of the dynamic that you've conveyed, because it would be of concern, of course, if things are not being conveyed in a way that, contemporaneous with what's going on, accurate decisions can be made. And so if things are consistently being downplayed, soft pedaled, et cetera, and the Department-wide distribution is not accurate enough, that's troubling. So thank you.

But I do want to just skip ahead for a few minutes if I could.

A I would like to just clarify for the record. I mean, that sentiment comes from a clear feeling amongst myself, I had this feeling, and I know that other people had it as well, that the Department doesn't want our clear understanding of the threats as we see them. So we're put in a very, very difficult position where do you try to get what

the Department will give you or do you try to speak openly and risk getting nothing and putting the mission in a worse place. It's a very difficult decision.

Q Yeah. And we want to help solve that dynamic definitely.

A Yes.

Q And that's why I'm pressing you a little hard on trying to figure out if there is a message being conveyed. I mean, you've identified \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. It is helpful to then try to flesh out, if this is a systemic message, we do want to help cure that. I think, quite frankly, a number of people in the State Department would want to cure it too. You may not share that belief, but I don't think that people like the results here. So if they feel like there's a breakdown in the communication.

But I do want to just jump ahead for a few minutes and talk, if we could, while we're still in an unclassified setting, about the Accountability Review Board. You did speak with the Accountability Review Board?

A I did.

Q And that was in November of 2013?

A I believe. Was it '12?

Q I'm sorry, 2012 --

A Yes.

Q -- because they were done by December of 2012.

A Thanksgiving week of '12.

Q All right. And how did you come to find out about the

Accountability Review Board?

A It had been discussed informally. I mean, everyone knew it was going to happen because people had died. And then an email went out, I think, Department-wide saying if you have information for the Accountability Review Board, please reach out to this.

Q When you referred to everyone knew it was going to be convened because people had died, as a statutory matter that's a requirement, right, that anytime there's a significant loss of life or, quite frankly, property I think even, there is an Accountability Review Board convened?

A That's my general understanding, yes.

Q And then did you volunteer, voluntarily come forward to share your information?

A Yes.

Q Did anyone discourage you from coming forward?

A Nobody discouraged me from coming forward, but the Accountability Review Board person that I contacted made it seem that I was not going to be probably contacted for an interview.

Q But you were contacted at some point?

A I subsequent to being told I would probably not be contacted sent an email that I felt would try to convince them to have me come before the Accountability Review Board.

Q And then you were contacted?

A And then I was contacted, yes.

Q What was the content of that email, if you feel comfortable

sharing it?

A There were roughly 30 or so DS agents who had served TDY in Benghazi, and what I was hearing through the grapevine was that maybe one or two would be spoken to and that there wasn't an interest in speaking with those ARSOs. I contacted the Accountability Review Board, gave my information, told them that they should talk to me. And a person told me that the Accountability Review Board -- and I'm paraphrasing -- but kind of knows who they want to talk to, you know, probably shouldn't expect anything, but you never know, you might be contacted at a later date.

So I sent an email back to the Accountability Review Board, an email that said the DS agents that were there are going to probably have very critical information about the Department. If you only interview a couple of them, that information is going to be attributable to those people. There's a climate of fear in the Department, in Diplomatic Security right now, so this is having a chilling effect upon Diplomatic Security and agents who have served there. I think you should really consider speaking to a large number of DS agents who have served there so as not to perpetuate that climate of fear.

Something to those effects. And probably within 3 minutes I got a phone call asking when I wanted to come in.

Q And then did you subsequently go in and talk with them?

A Yes.

Q So your goal -- what was your goal in talking with them?

A My goal in talking to them was to try to accurately portray

the issues and challenges that I dealt with while I was in Benghazi engaged in this expeditionary diplomacy. And I had a secondary goal, because my job was one of the five agents specifically designated by the Department of State to deal with expeditionary diplomacy around the world. My job was to try to make sure that something like this did not happen again, and at the time I did not think we were on the right track to do that.

Q And given that goal, were you fully forthcoming with the ARB in sharing your information?

A Yes.

Q So to the extent you had previously had concerns about being fully forthcoming, you set them aside and were fully forthcoming about what you shared with them?

A Yes. And I'll backtrack a little bit on that question, because you raised this earlier, in terms of the decision to how forthcoming you're going to be in your emails with the Department of State. I knew I had a very short window of 5, 6 days to get what I was going to get for Benghazi, and I knew that based on my position in IP, based on my understanding of expeditionary diplomacy, based on the contacts I had in IP, and based on the actions of my predecessor, which was not very active, and I didn't know what was going to happen after me, I had to make the very difficult decision of do I try to stand my ground on my opinions and very likely alienate Diplomatic Security management, which is going to hurt Benghazi and hurt the funding, or do I try to get the type of funding, type of support that I've been

told I realistically might be able to get.

And I have no problem if anybody wants to question that decision. It's open. Maybe I should have been more forthcoming, maybe I should have rocked the boat a lot harder. But I could have lost all funding, I could have been sent home the next day, I could have faced retribution, and the next guy coming after me might have even been more afraid to ask for.

So were we going to try to do this incrementally or was I going to try to make a big statement on the 10 days that I was there? That's a difficult decision, and unfortunately it's not one that I should have had to make, but it's a position that I was put in. Do I try to make a stand in 1 day and embarrass the Department or do I try to get the funding that's realistic and try to set up my successors to be a little more successful, and then hopefully they can be a little more successful?

And, again, simultaneous to that, I didn't have a full understanding of where these problems were coming from. Part of me in that 10-day process was still hoping that there was just some misunderstanding, that this was a bureaucratic logjam and maybe this logjam could be broken. I didn't have full visibility on this.

Again, as I went back to IP, I got more visibility on what the problems actually were and realized that it wasn't really a logjam, that it was never going to happen. I was starting to feel that way while I was in Benghazi, but it was not 100 percent clear to me.

In hindsight, knowing that it was never going to -- the funding

stream was never going to open up, I probably would have been more open in my disagreement with the Department. But, again, I was not fully aware of that because, again, information was not fully forthcoming to us.

Q So when you talk about the 10 days, you're talking about the 10 days you were the RSO?

A That I was the RSO, yes.

Q Okay. When you did -- and we could spend some time figuring out how and the various avenues that you got greater visibility -- but when you did get greater visibility and you looked back and said, wow, this was my optimism, what did you do at that point to then bring it to people's attention that this was still an ongoing, very serious problem? And I guess it would help us understand, like you said you got more visibility in IP. What was that visibility?

A I was working in the office where these decisions were taking place. And, again, I was not directly in the NEA chain or Benghazi chain, but I was in the cubicle, you know, five down, so I had sort of headquarters visibility on what that process was.

And, again, by the time I had gone to Benghazi initially, that was November, I joined the IP office in, call it July. September would have been spent in New York for the U.N. General Assembly, October would have been spent in Hawaii for the APEC, the Asia-Pacific economic commission, and then I almost went immediately from that to Benghazi. So I had a relatively short span in IP at the time. So I was starting to understand it.



Once I went back to the office and having had that experience in Benghazi, I was much more comfortable working in that IP environment. So, again, my understanding was much better after Benghazi than it was leading up to it.

Q And that learning curve and what you learned, did you share that fully with the Accountability Review Board?

A Yes.

Q So the information that you then kind of put together was all shared fully with the ARB?

A Yes.

Q Have you had an opportunity to read the Accountability Review Board's report?

A Yes.

Q So the classified version?

A No.

Q The unclassified version?

A Yes.

Q On some of the things we've talked about today, you know, they make a number of findings and recommendations, but before we get to those, did you also talk with the Best Practice Panel? There was a Best Practice Panel convened.

A No.

Q Do you know anything about that panel or its process?

A Just to state this. I have never been spoken to by anybody in the Department of State about Benghazi, ever. I've spoken to the

ARB, and that's it. I've never had a single official discussion with anybody from the Department of State or Diplomatic Security about Benghazi.

Q Have you sought to have a conversation with --

A Yes.

Q Who have you sought to speak with?

A I've asked -- I asked Greg Starr.

Q When did that request -- was that after he had become the Assistant Secretary?

A So, yes, after he had been brought in as the Assistant Secretary, Greg Starr came. So the summer of 2013. I was in BRISO school, that's basic regional security officer school, it is a 10-week course before we go overseas as ARSOs. Greg Starr spoke to our class. He said something initially which I could talk about later if we talk about retaliation.

Q When we're in the classified setting.

A It doesn't need to be classified.

Q Oh. Okay.

A The climate that we work in, in Diplomatic Security. But after that he opened it up for a little bit of Q&A. We had seen in the BRISO school they had a very nicely and well done sort of after-action review for the evacuation of Tripoli. It was very well done.

In terms of Benghazi, I've never been spoken to ever by anybody from the State Department about Benghazi. I know other, many other DS agents who have critical information have never to this day been

spoken to by anybody in the State Department. I've never seen an after-action review, hot wash, whatever you want to call it of what happened in Benghazi by Diplomatic Security or the State Department other than the ARB. When I've asked sort of senior people within DS, is there -- about a DS review or after-action report on Benghazi, I was told we don't need one because we have the ARB.

So I've never been spoken to. Many people I know that said they've never been spoken to. I've never seen any sort of a real review of Benghazi and what happened by DS or the State Department other than the ARB.

So when Greg Starr spoke to our class I asked him, I said, we've seen a great AAR video done by DS about the evacuation in Benghazi, which is really useful. We've had -- but we've had Benghazi, we've had Tunis, we've had Khartoum, we've had Sana'a, we've had all these evacuations, and we hear rumors amongst agents about what happened, what worked, what didn't. We're not seeing good products or after-action reviews about what happened, time lines, real good information.

So I asked him, I said, has DS done or will we ever do a hot wash, an after-action review of Benghazi? And he looked at me and said, you're probably too inexperienced and young of an agent to know this, but there's something called the DS Daily, and everything you need would be in there. DS Daily is just a daily summary of what happened around the world.

So when I asked the Assistant Secretary of Diplomatic Security,

you know, in a room full of 30 people, will we, have we ever done, because we haven't been spoken to by anybody, and there's people that would like to speak, he was told that it's the DS Daily. I have no idea what to make of that answer.

Q So this was your request for a meeting with Mr. Starr?

A It wasn't a request for a personal meeting. It was a request for a review. Again, I didn't ask anybody specifically I want you to interview me because who would I make that request to specifically? I've made it very well known in DS/IP that there's a large number of us that have never been spoken to. I've made it very clear that I would like to be spoken to, a lot of agents would like to be spoken to. And the answer I --

Q What would help us, I think, is if you would give us their names, to the extent you're comfortable. I get that you might not be, but we're hearing from you that there's a large number of people who would like to be spoken to. Some of them may -- you know, we understand that some of them may have been spoken to unbeknownst to you, some of them may not have.

Q Yeah.

A But are there people in particular that you think need to be spoken to about Benghazi?

A Yes.

Q And who are those people?

Mr. Craig. You might want to take some time --

Mr. Yeah. I mean, that would just be --

Mr. Craig. -- and submit a list later on.

Ms. Sawyer. That's fine.

Mr.   . That would just be naming anybody that had anything to do with anything in Benghazi.

Mr. Craig. Why don't we just hold off on that and supply names.

Ms. Sawyer. Yeah.

BY MS. SAWYER:

Q I also think -- I mean, you said you have read the Accountability Review Board report, some of the findings that they make, and we can talk about those specific findings, do reflect, I think -- and you went and talked to the ARB and have assured us that you were fully forthcoming. I think you had the opportunity to review your notes?

A I looked at those, yeah.

Q Were those -- did those accurately reflect what you told the ARB?

A Yes.

Q And this committee has been given those notes. So the committee also has those notes.

So in their findings, for example, you know, the ARB did make findings, you know, and I --

Mr. Craig. Could we have a break?

Ms. Sawyer. Yeah. You know, I was --

Mr. Craig. If you're going to carry on --

Ms. Sawyer. Let's go off the record for a second before you call

what I'm doing carrying on. We're off the record.

[Whereupon, at 1:59 p.m., the interview proceeded in classified session.]

1       Ms. Barrineau. Okay. We'll go back on the record. And  
2       for the record, I would note that we have moved to a  
3       classified setting to restart the interview. We'll go as  
4       high as secret. So if you think anything is going to go  
5       above a secret clearance -- I suspect it won't -- but just  
6       let us know and we'll stop and regroup.

7       Mr. [REDACTED] All right.

8                       EXAMINATION

9               BY MS. BARRINEAU:

10       Q     The first thing I want to go back to is I asked you  
11       near the beginning of our hour if through your experiences in  
12       IP and CSO, if you had seen any other posts that were like  
13       Benghazi, for lack of a better phrase, and you said you would  
14       rather discuss that here.

15       A     Yeah. Prior to Benghazi, the situation I was  
16       directly involved with that would have been similar to this  
17       is Juba, South Sudan. This was one of the S/CRS' first big  
18       types of deployments for expeditionary diplomacy. It was  
19       similar in the sense that we were putting diplomats not at  
20       the Embassy, not in USG facilities, but staying out in  
21       various locations around the country that probably had pretty  
22       poor safety standards, and it was considered a volatile,  
23       high-threat environment. So that was an issue that we were  
24       managing.

25       So I spent about 4 months total, 3 months on one TDY and

1       then a month later -- a year later -- for another TDY. And  
2       so it had some similarities to this.

3             Q     Do you feel like IP, DS, or the State Department,  
4       do you feel like Juba was managed the same way Benghazi was  
5       managed?

6             A     It was managed much differently. There was a lot  
7       of money that year in S/CRS' budget, so they put in -- they  
8       ordered some armored containers to be shipped out there,  
9       which never got there in time really to be used.

10            We managed it more with -- the difference there was none  
11   of these were permanent locations. So we managed that with a  
12   fairly restrictive travel policy to where people could spend  
13   no more than 5 days at one of these locations. They varied  
14   from staying at sort of a church center in one particular  
15   town, a hotel in another town, or a U.N. outpost in another  
16   town.

17           We mitigated against threat because the facility wasn't  
18   very safe by, again, restricting and varying up travel, so  
19   people only stayed for a short period of time, very  
20   restrictive on travel plans, who they were meeting, where  
21   they were going, transportation, et cetera.

22           It was done a little bit ad hoc. It was a good  
23   experience for me. It wasn't necessarily a formalized  
24   template. It wasn't necessarily the best way; it wasn't the  
25   worst way. But it was a way. But it was similar in that you



1 had chief of mission personnel staying out in some of these  
2 sort of austere conditions without really good, adequate  
3 security measures in place. But we were definitely very  
4 conscientious of the risks that put people in and the  
5 inability of us to respond to those risks as they occurred.

6 Q So when you got home from Benghazi, were they  
7 trying to use that model? Did anyone think that that had  
8 been successful enough that we should use it elsewhere?

9 A Yes. So when I got back from Benghazi -- and some  
10 of this will speak to an earlier question about, you know,  
11 did I try to talk to somebody, what did I try to do.

12 Q Right.

13 A Benghazi was technically out of my chain at that  
14 point. I went there as a TDY agent. I was, however,  
15 assigned specifically to CSO to do expeditionary diplomacy  
16 with them. Based on my experience from Benghazi, and before  
17 the eventual attack on Benghazi, that hardened me to quite a  
18 bit against the bureaucracy, and I became very much a thorn  
19 in the side of the Department and CSO. I became a very vocal  
20 supporter of security for our folks in the field doing this  
21 sort of thing in the various engagements that I worked on.  
22 And to be honest, we dealt with some of the same issues both  
23 before Benghazi and continually after Benghazi. In the CSO  
24 model, doing expeditionary diplomacy, some of those same  
25 issues remained.

1 After Benghazi, another situation that is similar that's  
2 ongoing, and this is the one I didn't want to talk about  
3 earlier, [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

4 That was -- CSO was sort of one of the leading elements from  
5 the Department on the engagement [REDACTED]. And  
6 it was not my primary portfolio with CSO, there was another  
7 agent who had that as her primary portfolio, but I would step  
8 in from time to time and help out. I did a 30-day TDY to  
9 [REDACTED] to assist and help get some things started in  
10 [REDACTED]. And that's another model that's, you  
11 know, that's similar.

12 In the discussions within CSO prior to being back from  
13 Benghazi I would hear references at the Assistant Secretary  
14 level in these meetings at CSO that the plan that CSO was  
15 pushing was that [REDACTED]

16 [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]  
17 [REDACTED] and we would do it on the Benghazi model.  
18 At which point I spoke up and said I would not recommend  
19 using the Benghazi model because the Benghazi model is going  
20 to fail and people are going to be killed in Benghazi. It's  
21 likely to fail; I would not implement that model in Benghazi.

22 Post-Benghazi the talk in CSO was we need a modified  
23 Benghazi model [REDACTED]. So that's  
24 not the [REDACTED] model. That was the talk of using the  
25 Benghazi model [REDACTED] if we were ever given that space to

1       operate. And I know that other elements of the Department  
2       were actively working on how we could, you know, develop a  
3       diplomatic channel [REDACTED], establish an outpost, et  
4       cetera.

5       [REDACTED]  
6       [REDACTED]  
7       [REDACTED]  
8       [REDACTED]  
9       But [REDACTED] is a similar type of mission where you  
10      have this maybe an ill-defined -- I'm not an expert on this  
11      because I stepped in to help 2 years ago on this issue. I  
12      can't tell you where it stands now. But at the time it was  
13      this, again, looking like it was going to be a nondiplomatic  
14      facility, a sort of gray area in terms of how we were going  
15      to support it, how we were going to fund it, how we were  
16      going to staff it. So faced with some of the similar choices  
17      and decisions.

18      Q     So what was the reaction when you said in the  
19      meeting, don't do it on the Benghazi model?

20      A     Nothing.

21      Q     Do you think, after the Benghazi attacks, do you  
22      think any changes were made to that plan or idea? Or I guess  
23      what I'm saying, or were they still thinking that that was  
24      the way that it should go, if you know?

25      A     Yeah. I wouldn't speak to what they were saying

1 about that specifically, [REDACTED]

2 [REDACTED]

3 Q Okay.

4 A And obviously a lot of things changed on the ground  
5 vis-a-vis opening diplomatic space [REDACTED] so I couldn't  
6 speak to the later developments in that discussion.

7 Q Okay. Let's switch topics a little bit. Another  
8 thing you said you would rather discuss here is when we were  
9 talking about different options for the compound, you said  
10 there was a third option. [REDACTED].

11 A The third option, yeah, was just that we take the  
12 other two diplomats and dump them off [REDACTED] and then  
13 have the DS agent take off.

14 And, again, I hope you appreciate, you know, the  
15 position I was in to try to, you know, try to read between  
16 the lines a little bit on some of these emails, that me  
17 saying flat out I'm going to abandon a diplomatic post is not  
18 something that's acceptable in the State Department. I  
19 verbalized that threat by phone to emphasize the seriousness  
20 of this to [REDACTED]. Hopefully, he would convey that. I hope  
21 he did; I don't know if he did.

22 But in that email that I sent, I gave three options that  
23 I knew were not acceptable to the State Department. There  
24 was no way they were going to leave two Americans without any  
25 security in Benghazi by themselves. There was no way they

1 were going to let me abandon the building. And the State  
2 Department is not going to cede responsibility for their  
3 people by dumping them off [REDACTED] with no other  
4 security support. So the only other option for them was to  
5 send us MSD replacements.

6 So, again, that was where I'm trying to put the  
7 Department or put Diplomatic Security in a box and try to  
8 force their hand to give me some TDY bodies. This was being  
9 done on the fly, again, with a relatively inexperienced  
10 agent, so I don't know that that was the best way to do it.  
11 That was the way I decided to do it, you know, probably, you  
12 know, getting 4 or 5 hours sleep a night, working around the  
13 clock. When I had time to get on a computer, which was very  
14 limited, that was the method that I chose to try to force the  
15 Department to give me a few bodies.

16 So, again, that would be an example of where that email  
17 in and of itself is not very harsh, but if you understand how  
18 the Department works, you would see that that was very much  
19 an aggressive push against the Department to try to get them  
20 to give us some bodies for security.

21 Q And just to make sure we've got this on the record,  
22 MSD ended up not coming because the two other -- I think it  
23 was two other agents -- wound up getting visas, so they came  
24 to Benghazi instead?

25 A I would have to defer to [REDACTED] on that. I

1 don't think those two MSD agents came. I know that initially  
2 I was told they were not going to come. Then I made the  
3 threat to abandon the post. And all this was happening as  
4 I'm also packing my bags and getting ready to leave and  
5 trying to finish up everything.

6 Immediately, I think, after sending that email  
7 threatening to abandon post, I got an email response saying  
8 MSD was going to send or try to send two MSD agents out.  
9 Again, at the last minute [REDACTED] decided to extend, and  
10 I think that they did not send the MSD agents then because  
11 they were going to -- that kind of neutralized my threat of  
12 having nobody there to cover it. And so I think that ended  
13 in them not sending the two MSD agents, but I could not be  
14 100 percent on that.

15 Q Understood. Okay, I'm sorry I'm jumping around. I  
16 just want to make sure we hit all the things that we were  
17 saving for this.

18 Okay, evacuation plans. You said you would rather  
19 discuss that here too. What was the plan for if you did  
20 evacuate? And you said that the tripwire documents with some  
21 of the evacuation options had long since been irrelevant. So  
22 what was the plan?

23 A So the tripwires that existed -- we found them on  
24 paper -- talked about, again, if this city falls to Qadhafi  
25 forces, then this will signify, you know, move to drive to

1 Egypt or something like that. The ground truth had already  
2 made all of that sort of, you know, irrelevant.

3 There was also information about helicopter egress and  
4 ships coming to rescue us. I called back to [REDACTED] at  
5 DS/IP. I asked him if we still had helicopters on standby  
6 and ships on standby, and he said we hadn't had that for  
7 months. So that EAP plan was several months old, and it  
8 wasn't even really an EAP plan.

9 [REDACTED] told me verbally. So what our discussion was, I  
10 asked him, then, what is our evacuation plan? What I was  
11 told is our evacuation plan is to link up [REDACTED] and  
12 we will drive into the middle of the desert, and they will  
13 call somebody. But that was basically our plan.

14 Q But there was, to your understanding, there was no  
15 one on standby particularly waiting for that call so that you  
16 knew you had a response time of X?

17 A Not to my knowledge. I would have no idea how or  
18 who they were going to call. But there was no specific  
19 place, no specific method. It was just we were all going to  
20 jump in cars and pick a deserted spot to drive to and then  
21 kind of deal with it from there.

22 Q Did you think that was a valid evacuation plan?

23 A No. I would mention this, and I would like to  
24 mention this, specifically in reference to what I think,  
25 unfortunately, has been a lack of -- we haven't really done a

1 real review of what happened in Benghazi. The ARB is looking  
2 at a lot of different pieces, and what I asked the Assistant  
3 Secretary for, what I've asked vocally a lot of people about  
4 in DS is DS should -- and there's no reason why we wouldn't  
5 when you've had people die -- to do a very detailed review of  
6 how Diplomatic Security functioned in Benghazi for those 12  
7 months and what all the mistakes were.

8 You brought up the question of the EAP. Something that  
9 rings a bell to me is around May of 2012, I don't remember  
10 exactly how it worked, but I saw an email exchange about --  
11 so emergency action plans, EAPs, at most embassies it's a  
12 very formal, large document that basically gives a very  
13 detailed plan of how to deal with and what everyone's roles  
14 are for any type of one of the many types of emergency  
15 situations that could occur, an earthquake, a terrorist  
16 attack, a bombing, a kidnapping, et cetera, a fire.

17 And it was a -- I think it was a discussion amongst --  
18 and there's an office in DS headquarters that manages those  
19 EAPs for all the embassies around the world. And it was  
20 something along the lines of somebody was asking that they  
21 can't find EAPs for Tunis and Benghazi.

22 And then it was a response is about, you know, is  
23 Benghazi even a post? And then it's, oh, it's one of those  
24 weird things, not sure what it is. And then it was a  
25 response of, you know, if Libya were to somehow take the



1 spotlight, everybody is going to come looking for an EAP and  
2 wondering why we don't have one, you know, maybe we should  
3 think of doing an EAP-lite, you know, words to those effect.

4 And, I mean, there were dozens and dozens and dozens, if  
5 not hundreds of small, systematic, little failures that all  
6 contributed to what happened in Benghazi that have never been  
7 looked at or exposed because all those details are, I think,  
8 well below what the ARB was looking at in terms of some of  
9 these little interoffice issues that a lot of us in DS are  
10 acutely aware of.

11 Nobody in DS has done any sort of systematic or even ad  
12 hoc, I think, analysis of what those failures were. And the  
13 fact that we haven't done that means that when we do the next  
14 go-round, [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] wherever  
15 the next one is -- I'm all for expeditionary diplomacy, I've  
16 done a lot of it, I really enjoy it, I think it's important,  
17 but I also think we need to do a much better job of doing it.  
18 I think there's a lot of easy fixes that we could do if we  
19 really take a hard look at what we've done and where the  
20 failures have been.

21 Honestly, I think in the Bureau of Diplomatic Security,  
22 they've been more than happy not to be forced to look at  
23 these because a lot of people are going to have to answer  
24 some hard questions about decisions they made or things that  
25 they did. I'm happy to answer hard questions about decisions

1       that I made and things that I did, you know, tough decisions  
2       I made, if they were right or wrong. I think people would  
3       learn from that if they're in a similar situation. And I  
4       literally think there's probably hundreds of other scenarios  
5       like that that should have been looked at and haven't been  
6       looked at. So --

7               Q     So I guess that brings me with two follow-up  
8       questions to that. First, since we are -- we want to look at  
9       everything, as Heather Sawyer said earlier, we really want to  
10      get to the bottom of the truth in everything that happened.  
11      So are there things that you think, below the level of the  
12      ARB or whatever, that you don't think have been looked at  
13      that we can look at?

14             A     Yes. Again, if I were running things, I would want  
15      to speak to every single person who was in Benghazi and run  
16      through all these questions and issues with them. But I  
17      would also want to look at all the different offices back  
18      here in D.C. and what role they played, because there's a lot  
19      of support from back here in headquarters that people play  
20      out in the field. One or two people out in the field,  
21      there's actually very little that they can do because a lot  
22      of what they're doing is hands on. They rely a lot on the  
23      support offices back here.

24             To the extent with expeditionary diplomacy, because  
25      there aren't FAM regulations governing what has to be done or

1 what can be done, the offices back here don't have a clear  
2 idea about, how do you do an EAP for an expeditionary  
3 diplomacy post? Is an EAP required? I mean, maybe it's not  
4 even required. But if it's not required, why isn't that very  
5 well known and why isn't that something that from the step  
6 one of the planning page that we understand that there will  
7 not be a detailed EAP as it exists at every other post and  
8 how are we going to compensate or mitigate for that going  
9 forward? The fact that we haven't discussed that or haven't  
10 acknowledged that means it's probably not going to be  
11 implemented in, you know, from step one of the next mission.

12 So there's tons of things you can look at.

13 Where respect to Benghazi, I don't know why this  
14 happened. There's scuttlebutt and rumor about why. But this  
15 was a, from what I understand, it was a protection mission  
16 from the get-go as opposed to an MSD mission. I think it's  
17 reasonable to assume that a lot of the deficiencies that  
18 followed may have been a result of not having had MSD in  
19 there from the get-go. Or having MSD there from the get-go,  
20 they might have been able -- they might have had the  
21 credibility to make the assessment that this is a post that  
22 cannot sustain itself, this needs to be stopped immediately.  
23 An MSD team who does this for a living would have more  
24 credibility than a random TDY agent that just came out there  
25 for 6 weeks.

1           So we should look at all of those decisions, and  
2           everybody should be, you know, I won't say held accountable,  
3           but everyone should talk about the actions they took, the  
4           decisions that they made. We should look at that and we  
5           should learn. We should make a lot of recommendations about  
6           how to do this better.

7           So that's what I would hope where we would go from this.  
8           And, again, my fear so far has just been with only relying on  
9           the ARB and the ARB only, the ARB wasn't looking at some of  
10          these issues. And I think a lot of people that probably  
11          should have did not testify as the ARB. The ARB had nobody  
12          from Diplomatic Security on it, nobody really active in the  
13          State Department on it. So there's a lot of offices and  
14          issues that they wouldn't even probably think or know to ask  
15          about or look at.

16          So they may have looked at accurately and thoroughly the  
17          issues and the people that were brought to their attention,  
18          but there's undoubtedly hundreds of other issues and people  
19          and concerns that were never brought to their attention and  
20          they wouldn't even be aware of.

21          So that would be what I hope the takeaway from this is.

22          Q       So would it be fair to say that maybe by no one's  
23          fault, but that the ARB wasn't a fully satisfactory review of  
24          Benghazi just because of things maybe they didn't know, but  
25          you don't feel like that was a comprehensive review or hot

1 wash of what happened in Benghazi?

2 A I don't think it was a very comprehensive review of  
3 what happened in Benghazi. And I don't think that the ARB in  
4 and of itself is a bad thing, and I think the ARB would have  
5 been good in the context of having, again, maybe that more  
6 specific Diplomatic Security thorough review. And so I think  
7 you would have needed a couple different levels of review.

8 Obviously, the ARB is not going to necessarily interview  
9 that many people at that level of detail. But Diplomatic  
10 Security certainly could because everybody in Diplomatic  
11 Security knows these programs and knows what these issues  
12 are. I can't understand at all why Diplomatic Security  
13 wouldn't want to review this the way that it has. But we  
14 haven't.

15 And like I said, still to this day I have never  
16 officially spoken to anybody in the Department of State about  
17 what happened in Benghazi. And I'm confident that some of  
18 the information I gave you today is probably relevant to the  
19 discussion, and I think there's other people that also have  
20 never been spoken to that also have information that's  
21 relevant to the discussion that would help the Department go  
22 forward. So the fact that doesn't happen to me does raise  
23 some concerns about if we're ready, if we're prepared for the  
24 future.

25 Q Will you go back a minute and explain to us the

1 difference between what you meant when you said a protection  
2 mission versus an MSD mission?

3 A Yeah. And, again, I'm not an expert on this, this  
4 predated me, but this was my understanding, was that the  
5 Benghazi mission, because it started as sort of a protective  
6 detail on the Special Envoy Chris Stevens, that -- and,  
7 again, from what I've heard, it was sort of a turf battle  
8 between MSD and the Office of Protection. I don't know that  
9 that is, in fact, what occurred. I know a lot of people were  
10 shocked and dismayed that this mission went to the Office of  
11 Protection, which normally would have no reason to oversee a  
12 mission like this. And then when it transitioned from a  
13 protective detail into sort of the physical presence, if it  
14 had been an MSD mission from the get-go -- and, again, MSD,  
15 this is what they do, they operate in these environments,  
16 they operate in teams, they train for this -- I think a lot  
17 of -- I think there may have been some --

18 Ms. Barrineau. You're okay.

19 Voice. The whole space is cleared.

20 Ms. Barrineau. Oh, yeah, you're fine.

21 Mr. [REDACTED]. Okay. And so, from the time that I was  
22 there, I don't think MSD -- they had come to Benghazi, but  
23 only in the context of coming for VIP visits. If Senator  
24 McCain or Susan Rice had come to Benghazi for a visit, then  
25 MSD and some other DOD elements would fly in, but then fly

1 out. I don't know that MSD ever had a presence on the ground  
2 specifically in Benghazi.

3 Had they had a presence, I think the situation would  
4 have been better. A lot of the assessments, a lot of the  
5 things that I was trying to do, me and [REDACTED] were trying to  
6 do would have been better done by a five-, six-man, or by two  
7 or three five-, six-man MSD teams that do this for a living.

8 So by not having made that decision early, I think it  
9 set in motion, you know, sort of a perpetuation of some of  
10 these failures that continued. MSD, I don't think, ever had  
11 ownership of that, so there was a reluctance then maybe to  
12 come back.

13 But, again, like I said, there are literally dozens, if  
14 not hundreds of questions like this that could and should be  
15 asked and answered that I think would make the Department  
16 much stronger going forward in doing this type of thing.

17 Q Okay. Well, if you think of any more while we're  
18 all here, keep telling us. We'll make an extensive list.

19 A I mean, again --

20 Q Seriously.

21 A No, something I would talk about or want to know  
22 about, again, when we had a decision by the acting director  
23 of Diplomatic Security, when you approve a memo and you  
24 approve it with the caveat that this is an unfunded mandate  
25 and a drain on personnel resources, again, that's a very

1       important -- I mean, that is a key component of how that  
2       mission is going to go forward. And this, again, is above my  
3       head in terms of how you make this happen.

4       I'm pretty sure the Department can find a way, given  
5       those sorts of constraints, sort of structurally from the  
6       beginning to go forward, but if you don't acknowledge that  
7       from the beginning and if you're not transparent and you  
8       don't let everybody know that these are the constraints we're  
9       working with going forward, how do we compensate now to make  
10      sure that these don't become impediments to security down the  
11      road, that's important. The fact that we've really not  
12      talked about or identified kind of that decisionmaking  
13      process as being a key sort of point of failure in how we  
14      were able to provide security to me is troubling.

15      Because, again, I think you can make that determination  
16      that this is an unfunded mandate and it is going to be a  
17      drain on our resources, you can make that determination and  
18      still be successful, but you have to be very clear about that  
19      determination early and come up with some creative,  
20      transparent ways that you're going to mitigate and  
21      compensate, and then make everybody buy into that, and then  
22      go forward.

23      And we sort of just kind of deal with it as we go along,  
24      which I think is -- I think that's where we are right now,  
25      and I think that's unfortunate, because, again, a lot of



1 things are going to fall through the cracks.

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BY MS. BARRINEAU:

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Q So is that essentially the difference between being proactive and reactive?

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A Yes.

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Q To go back to something else that we were talking about earlier, when we were talking about the local guard force that you had, and then I know you went back to IP, so I know you have kind of a unique perspective of being in Benghazi but also being in IP and knowing how that works, was your local guard force when you were there tied to the life services contract with the chef and whoever else was there? Do you know?

14

15

A I don't know how it was tied in terms of financially.

16

Q Okay.

17

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A It was -- I don't think it was tied -- I can't remember exactly. It was -- there was a guy named [REDACTED], he was a local guy, lived in one of the hotels that we had a contract with. [REDACTED] was the IMO that dealt with that. The contract was very problematic.

22

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And one of the problems, again, that you get in is the contract, because we looked at it, the contract was, like, a page, it was like a Word document, maybe two pages. And so when we had questions about it, I had people back in the LGF

1 office, they were citing to me, well, you got to look at this  
2 provision, this provision, and this provision. And there's  
3 no provisions. It's a Word document that somebody, you know,  
4 ginned up on the computer one night.

5 So, you know, having that, it really wasn't up to any  
6 sort of legal contractual binding standard at all. But,  
7 again, that wasn't my primary purview, because that was the  
8 IMO's job to deal with that.

9 Q So once you -- and you may not know -- but once you  
10 got back to IP, do you have any idea how we transitioned from  
11 that to the Blue Mountain Group?

12 A I only have an early view on that. I can't  
13 remember. I don't think that the Blue Mountain Group had  
14 been identified, but I know that the IMO when I was there,  
15 [REDACTED] -- [REDACTED], something like this -- he was out  
16 of Frankfurt, could not stand the guy who ran the contract  
17 that we had, [REDACTED], and he was doing everything in his power  
18 to get the contract voided with [REDACTED]. And it had more to do  
19 with administrative and financial dealings with him and him  
20 just not coming through on certain things. So he was having  
21 a very hard time dealing with him and he was trying to get  
22 the contract terminated.

23 The time I was there, there was no discussion of, well,  
24 then what comes next? It was just this guy is too much  
25 trouble for us to deal with, we've got to find an

1 alternative.

2 Q But at the time there weren't discussions about  
3 what those specific alternatives would be?

4 A Not when I was there.

5 Q Okay. I think we touched on this earlier too, but  
6 just to kind of flesh it out a little bit. So you said [REDACTED]  
7 [REDACTED] was the RSO before you.

8 A He was the RSO when I arrived.

9 Q When you got there.

10 A Yes.

11 Q So I know you probably didn't necessarily have  
12 turnover notes, because you guys overlapped for a while, but  
13 what did he tell you about his time there or what did he pass  
14 to you?

15 A We overlapped by a couple weeks.

16 Q Right.

17 A So we were there for a couple weeks. So I just  
18 went to work as an ARSO for him. So when he left, I just  
19 sort of took over. But typically this was one of the big  
20 problems that we had and this was, again, part of the desire  
21 to keep us, from what I understood from [REDACTED], capped at  
22 three agents.

23 Turnover typically consisted of if a new agent was  
24 coming in, an agent would drive out to the airport, pick him  
25 up, bring him back to the mission, give him a couple-hour

1       brief, show him around the compound, show him where things  
2       were, we might get in the car, drive around town, go to a  
3       couple of the spots that we normally would go to, give him a  
4       GPS, and then that other agent would take that other agent to  
5       the airport that night and he would fly out.

6       So you would have, you know, sort of a left seat-right  
7       seat for, you know, 6 hours sometimes, sometimes an  
8       overnight, but it was in and out. So there wasn't very much  
9       of a handover. That wasn't always the case, sometimes you  
10      could overlap, but, I mean, that was very often the case.

11               BY MR. BEATTIE:

12              Q     One question I had. You may not have any optic  
13      onto this. It's fine if you don't. Typically, when the  
14      Department operates in a semipermissive or more dangerous  
15      environment, in theater, for example, there's a contract, a  
16      standing contract for the Department to employ private  
17      security contractors to beef up security at posts that may  
18      face a higher threat. Is that correct?

19              A     I don't have good optics on that process.

20              Q     Okay. So you don't have a good optic on why that  
21      was not the case, either in Benghazi or in Tripoli, for that  
22      matter, why the Department did not employ any of these  
23      existing contracts to bring in a company that would beef up  
24      security, as they do in Iraq or Afghanistan?

25              A     Yeah. That was not an issue that I was dealing

1 with.

2 Q Okay.

3 A I know it was being discussed, but I had no role in  
4 that.

5 Q Okay. Thanks.

6 BY MS. CLARKE:

7 Q So we've talked a little bit about the ARB and that  
8 you spoke with the ARB. I just wanted to flesh out a little  
9 bit more details about your time at the ARB. Can you just  
10 describe who was there, how long you spent with them, were  
11 you the only person being interviewed?

12 A I mean, I was the only person being interviewed in  
13 that room at that time.

14 Q Okay.

15 A I spoke -- it was over the week of Thanksgiving.  
16 Pickering and Mullen were not present. I believe the rest of  
17 the panel was. I think the interview probably went for about  
18 an hour and a half, hour 45.

19 Q Was there anyone else present other than members of  
20 the ARB panel, DOJ, FBI?

21 A No. It was the members of the ARB panel, and there  
22 was, I believe it was one of the staff from the ARB that was  
23 in there, maybe taking notes, administratively running that.  
24 I was also with an AFSA lawyer. She was present.

25 Q During the previous hour, I think you said

1 something to the effect of there was a lack of investigative  
2 procedures and transparency involving the ARB. Could you  
3 kind of elaborate what you meant by that?

4 A Yeah. Like I said, the -- I think I was talking  
5 about, you know, across the board as well, just from the time  
6 of the attack to this day there's been a lack of an  
7 investigative process in terms of what happened. And as I  
8 mentioned in my comments earlier, that the ARB so far is the  
9 only thing that's been done.

10 Again, the ARB -- my personal opinion, the ARB, the  
11 process is okay, but it took -- it looked not just at  
12 Diplomatic Security, it looked at a lot of different things.  
13 It looked at the context it was taken in politically, it  
14 looked at -- it was a very broad-stroke investigation. And  
15 my understanding was there were quite a few people that were  
16 never interviewed by the ARB. Like I said, I felt that I was  
17 not going to be interviewed by the ARB. So if left to the --  
18 if not for me pushing back what I felt pretty vigorously,  
19 none of what I gave the ARB and gave you today would have  
20 even been in that testimony.

21 And I know there's a lot of people that are probably  
22 okay not testifying at the ARB. It was an intimidating --  
23 not the ARB itself, but the atmosphere around it was a little  
24 bit intimidating.

25 Q What do you mean by that?

1           A     And this might link up a little bit earlier,  
2     Heather, with what you -- we talked about earlier with, you  
3     know, perception of one's ability to speak up and the  
4     retaliation against them.

5           So we talked about the impression that I had talking to  
6     people when I was in Benghazi. After the Benghazi attack, it  
7     was evident that there was going to be a -- obviously an ARB.  
8     The deaths trigger that. Again, Charlene Lamb, I worked in  
9     her office, she scheduled -- we had a weekly meeting in that  
10    office after it was clear, again, that the ARB was going to  
11    be convened, and obviously everyone knew that Charlene Lamb  
12    would be at the center of that storm.

13          Paraphrasing, but this is pretty accurate -- and, again,  
14    I'm still at the time -- I'm probably a just barely tenured  
15    now junior agent -- she told the room that, some of you are  
16    likely to be interviewed by the ARB. I'm not telling you not  
17    to cooperate, but you're going to be asked very, very  
18    specific questions, and by all means you should give very,  
19    very, very specific answers. There's no reason to feel like  
20    you should, you know, elaborate too much.

21          And, again, everyone's going to take that differently.  
22    I took that as, you know, not a vote of confidence to, you  
23    know, go run out and start telling your story. Personally,  
24    having been as, you know, personally invested in Benghazi as  
25    I was, that clearly was not going to prevent me from going to



1 the ARB. It may have had an impact on other people.

2 And even that I was willing to go talk to the ARB, I was  
3 nevertheless very cognizant of the fact that by me pushing to  
4 go in front of the ARB and having heard the comment like that  
5 from Deputy Assistant Secretary about testimony that was  
6 likely to be very critical of her, among other people, that,  
7 yeah, I felt that I was -- again, it was a, you know,  
8 semihostile-type atmosphere, a threatening atmosphere.

9 Subsequent to that, and this -- I'll just maybe, again,  
10 paint a picture of the atmosphere and the environment that,  
11 you know, we as agents serve in -- subsequent to that, I  
12 received -- again, I was in IP, which was kind of the center  
13 of the focus of this -- an email went out to IP which was a  
14 FOIA request asking anybody who had relevant documents on  
15 Benghazi to provide hard copies to the DS FOIA office,  
16 Freedom of Information Act, downstairs in SA-20.

17 When I looked at the -- and I was in IP, and, again, I  
18 was one of the very few agents who served in Benghazi as a  
19 TDY agent and was also in IP -- I noticed that the  
20 distribution list was limited primarily to IP. So I  
21 emailed or called several friends who I knew had been there  
22 but were coming from TDY from field offices and who had  
23 served in Benghazi and really had relevant information, and  
24 none of them had gotten this FOIA request.

25 So I went downstairs to the FOIA office with all my

1 documents that I printed out, gave it to them, and I asked  
2 the FOIA office, I said, you know, I don't know what the  
3 issue is here, but a lot of the agents who served there have  
4 not gotten this request.

5 And I asked this because I wasn't sure. I, you know,  
6 don't know what the legalities are around this. I asked her  
7 if it was okay for me to forward this FOIA request to people  
8 that I knew that might have relevant documents or if this  
9 should come from another source.

10 She said, by all means, yeah, you can forward this to  
11 anybody. And I asked her why it wouldn't have gone out to  
12 all the agents who had served there, and she said that DS had  
13 told FOIA that DS/IP typically controls all the RSO shops, so  
14 there's no reason for it to go out wider, because nobody else  
15 would have relevant information.

16 So I explained to the FOIA office that, you know,  
17 actually probably 95 percent of the agents who were out there  
18 have nothing to do with IP and are out in the broader DS  
19 community in the U.S. and around the world. The FOIA office  
20 seemed concerned about this. They said that they would take  
21 it up with DS and follow up.

22 A couple days later I got an email from somebody who  
23 forwarded me the email chain, kind of looped it back to me,  
24 where it had gone to the DS front office. And I don't  
25 remember the name of the woman who said this, but it was

1 words to the effect of, yeah, DS has looked at this and we  
2 thought that the TDY ARSOs who were out there, their emails  
3 were probably just full of time and attendance sheets and  
4 complaints about how bad the food was.

5 So post-Benghazi with, you know, 30 or so TDY ARSOs,  
6 junior agents, a lot of whom had served in the RSO  
7 capacity -- like, when I went out there, I went there as an  
8 ARSO. And I only served as RSO by default because there was  
9 a gap. So under normal circumstances I never would have been  
10 an RSO, but I still would have had access to this  
11 information.

12 DS front office determination was that my emails and  
13 other people that you're probably going to interview next  
14 week, this week, our information wasn't limited to time and  
15 attendance sheets and complaining about how bad the food was.

16 You know, other agents I talked to, I had questions  
17 about whether or not that was, you know, that the DS senior  
18 management clearly just is that disconnected from what  
19 happened in Benghazi that they don't understand who was  
20 serving there or if it was a deliberate attempt to prevent  
21 people who were there from getting this FOIA request. I  
22 honestly don't know. And this is honestly a question we were  
23 asking ourselves at the time.

24 The fact that we're asking those questions, I would  
25 argue does not create, again, an atmosphere of ease and

1 comfort when you're trying to push these issues. And that,  
2 you know, issue was raised by others as well.

3 I'll follow up with one more thing. This is a little,  
4 you know, kind of -- it's a little sensitive, but just this  
5 maybe show a trend. So that would have been around the time  
6 just before the ARB. So if you fast forward, this is the  
7 summer of 2013. This is the same meeting I discussed earlier  
8 where I asked specifically Assistant Secretary Starr if there  
9 had been or ever would be a detailed DS review of Benghazi.

10 I'll backtrack a little bit in that to the beginning of  
11 our class's interaction with Assistant Secretary Starr, and  
12 this, I think, will shed some light on the climate that we  
13 work in. Assistant Secretary Starr walked into a room full  
14 of, I don't know, 25 students and an instructor, sat down at  
15 the table. This is going to be inappropriate language.  
16 Should I just say directly what the quote was? Is that  
17 appropriate?

18 Ms. Clarke. Yes.

19 Ms. Barrineau. Go ahead.

20 Mr. [REDACTED]. So Assistant Secretary Starr said, I'm  
21 going to give you guys one piece of advice before you go  
22 overseas. He banged his fist into the table and he said,  
23 just shut the fuck up, shut your fuckin' mouths. He said,  
24 you guys are about to go overseas. You guys think you know  
25 more than your senior RSOs, you think you know more than

1 people back here in D.C. You don't know shit. Shut the fuck  
2 up and do your job. And he said this yelling.

3 That was our introduction to Assistant Secretary Starr  
4 as we were about to go overseas. Those were the one piece of  
5 advice that the senior Diplomatic Security official gave a  
6 new group of ARSOs going out for their first assignment.

7 Everybody in that room took that very poorly. Everybody  
8 in that room was going to take that a little differently  
9 based on their experience within the organization. So I have  
10 my own sort of view about what that meant and where that was  
11 coming from, but it's hard for me to believe that there's a  
12 way to take that that's not negative.

13 So, again, I mean, I can only say that based on my  
14 experience with the organization, I would say that Bureau of  
15 Diplomatic Security and the Department writ large is not  
16 really -- does not have an atmosphere conducive to junior  
17 officers, junior agents being overtly critical or speaking  
18 up, you know, or causing waves, making waves within the  
19 Department. And I'm not alone in that. So --

20 Q When you were talking about this FOIA request that  
21 went out to you, do you recall when that occurred?

22 A I'd be guessing, but it would be right before, I  
23 think, the ARB. It was the first -- I believe it was the  
24 first congressional FOIA. I'd have to go back and look at  
25 old emails. I can't remember the exact date.

1 Q Okay. So some time in the fall of 2012?

2 A I believe so, yes. The ARB was 2012, correct?

3 Q Yes.

4 A It came out that same year, right?

5 Mr. Craig. Yes.

6 Mr. [REDACTED] Yeah.

7 BY MS. BARRINEAU:

8 Q You said you talked to the FOIA people and they  
9 said you could forward the email. Did you forward the email?

10 A I immediately forwarded it to several people, and  
11 then -- I mean, additionally the email loop that I got back,  
12 it eventually did, because -- to their office, the DS FOIA  
13 office, the response to -- you know, DS believes that that  
14 would just be emails about, you know, complaining about the  
15 food.

16 Q Right.

17 A I believe the FOIA office response was, why don't  
18 you let the FOIA office make those determinations about who  
19 has relevant information. So then it did -- it was dispersed  
20 after the fact to domestic offices and other places. It  
21 would not have been had I not brought it to the FOIA office's  
22 attention, and a lot of people who had relevant documents  
23 would not have gotten that FOIA request, or at least at that  
24 time would not have gotten it. Maybe they would have gotten  
25 it at a later date. I can't speculate on that.

1 BY MR. BEATTIE:

2 Q I know you said you don't remember here when that  
3 email was. Do you have access to that email?

4 A I have to go back and look. Having switched from  
5 D.C. to overseas and --

6 Mr. Craig. Are you talking about the F-O-I-A?

7 Mr. [REDACTED]. The FOIA.

8 Mr. Beattie. Yes, sir. To the extent that you have  
9 access to it or can get access to it, is that something you'd  
10 be willing to share with the committee?

11 Mr. [REDACTED]. Sure.

12 BY MS. BARRINEAU:

13 Q I have one more question, if you can be specific  
14 and if you feel comfortable talking about this. You said  
15 that agents in general, or junior agents don't feel  
16 comfortable speaking up for fear of retribution of some sort.  
17 What do you think that you specifically, or if other agents  
18 have told you, what were you afraid that could happen? What  
19 did you think would happen if you spoke up?

20 A I guess that would depend at what time, what  
21 timeframe we're talking about, if I'm to speak to myself  
22 specifically.

23 Q Sure.

24 A I mean, I can generalize in general terms what  
25 people's fears are that have been expressed to me of the

1       general population of agents, but --

2           Q     Let's do both, you specifically and then what you  
3       think the general --

4           A     Me specifically, at the time I was in Benghazi, I  
5       felt that if I spoke up and said the things that I wanted to  
6       say, that I would have been sent home the next day. And I  
7       also felt that, -- again, I felt that I was in a better  
8       position to try to get what support I could to Benghazi than  
9       somebody else would be coming in right after me, just based  
10      on the work that I had already done.

11          So I felt that if I had taken a stand to make myself  
12      feel better, I might leave Benghazi in a worse place in the  
13      short term. That's a difficult decision to make, to try to  
14      make that call, and I wish -- and we never should have been  
15      in a situation where I was forced to make that sort of  
16      determination, but I did, I was faced with that.

17          Before the ARB came out -- again, you also have to  
18      understand that as, again, a junior agent who's never been  
19      through at that time an ARB process, you know, this time I'd  
20      never been through any sort of hearing like this, people are  
21      a little bit intimidated of these. We don't know how they're  
22      going to go, we don't know what the outcome is going to be,  
23      we don't know what the impact is going to be.

24          And we do have, generally speaking, we do have a  
25      consider about retaliation. Me, personally, and even more so



1       now post-Benghazi, I'm not terribly concerned about  
2       retaliation myself, but I'm also saying things that, I mean,  
3       it should be self-evident that if some of the things that  
4       I've said to you today were to get to certain people  
5       tomorrow, that may affect my reputation and people might try  
6       to take that out on me.

7       But to me, it's just unacceptable to work in an  
8       environment where you have an Assistant Secretary who what I  
9       would consider threatens a group of agents and we're cowed  
10      into remaining silent, or if you speak up, you have to worry  
11      about maybe you're not going to get your next assignment,  
12      maybe you're going to be -- you know. And when you have  
13      families to consider, people worry about, where am I going to  
14      go next, am I going to get a good assignment career-wise, am  
15      I going to get a good assignment family-wise, am I going to  
16      be stuck doing something I don't want to do.

17      So those are considerations. I mean, I have to make  
18      those considerations now, and I know that I'm potentially  
19      risking my career within the Diplomatic Security by saying  
20      some of these things, I'm going to make some enemies if they  
21      hear this testimony. I think it's too important not to. But  
22      out of a group of people there's only a certain number of  
23      people that are going to listen to that advice to just shut  
24      the fuck up and they're going to follow the party line and  
25      they're just going to shut the fuck up.

1           And, you know, I would say across the Department, my  
2     experience has been it's a similar atmosphere, although not  
3     expressed as colorfully as the Assistant Secretary expressed  
4     it to us and not as harshly. But there's a, you know, a  
5     feeling of, you know, you kind of need to watch yourself in  
6     the Department and don't rock the boat and -- you know.

7           So those, I think, are the fears that I would have, that  
8     others have, that you really do face some career  
9     repercussions. I mean, had an attack on Benghazi never  
10    happened and had I started to adamantly speak out and  
11    challenge ambassadors and challenge -- I mean, if you look at  
12    it from that sense, if you have a junior, untenured agent out  
13    there openly criticizing ambassadors and assistant  
14    secretaries, that individual would look like, you know, a  
15    raving lunatic within the Department. People would not  
16    necessarily give that person credibility. You would look  
17    like you're out of control and you're trying to, you know,  
18    put the spotlight on you, in the absence of something bad  
19    happening.

20          So it's easy in hindsight to say, why didn't you say  
21    more or do more? But you don't know what's going to happen  
22    in the future, and if you go out there and, you know, make  
23    yourself, you know, that much of a spectacle within the  
24    Department community, there's probably going to be  
25    repercussions. And if nothing is to happen after that, you

1 know, you're going to have to deal with those repercussions.

2 Ms. Barrineau. Okay. I think we can go off the record.

3 [Recess.]

4 EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. WOOLFORK:

6 Q Go back on the record.

7 Again, my name is Brent Woolfork. I'm with my counsel,  
8 Heather Sawyer. And so we just have some questions that we  
9 wanted to go through earlier, a range of areas. And so one  
10 of them I wanted to discuss was the Accountability Review  
11 Board report. And I believe you had said earlier that you  
12 had read the report. Is that correct?

13 A It was a while ago. When it came out, yeah.

14 Q When it came out in the winter of 2012?

15 A '12, yeah, I guess.

16 Q Okay. I wanted to enter as Exhibit Number 2 the  
17 Accountability Review Board report. That did come out in  
18 December of 2012.

19 [REDACTED] Exhibit No. 2

20 was marked for identification.]

21 Mr. Woolfork. And I'll give you a few moments to take a  
22 look at that. What I'm actually going to do is point you to  
23 specific pages. And so I'm not asking you to read to entire  
24 report. I'll point you to specific passages within that  
25 report.

1           Ms. Sawyer. So let's go off the record just for a  
2       second.

3           [Discussion off the record.]

4           Mr. Woolfork. So, Agent [REDACTED] I just wanted to  
5       point you to, as I said earlier, a few different parts of the  
6       report. And the first one I want to point to, we're going to  
7       jump around a little bit, is on page 31 of the report.

8           Mr. Craig. Right at the end.

9           BY MR. WOOLFORK:

10          Q     And so it's the top of the page, in about the  
11       middle of that paragraph, there is a sentence that I'll read,  
12       and it reads, quote, "A comprehensive upgrade and  
13       risk-mitigation plan did not exist, nor was a comprehensive  
14       security review conducted by Washington for Benghazi in 2012.  
15       The unique circumstances surrounding the creation of the  
16       mission in Benghazi as a temporary mission outside the realm  
17       of permanent diplomatic posts resulted in significant  
18       disconnects and support gaps," end quote.

19          And earlier today you had talked about serious concerns  
20       that you had regarding the temporary mission status or, I  
21       guess, the nondiplomatic status of the post. Is that  
22       correct?

23          A     In general terms. And I would caveat this with,  
24       you know, temporary versus nondiplomatic, I'm not -- you  
25       know, and this is where some of the confusion lies, is we use

1 these terms, and it's not always clear exactly what those  
2 ramifications will be. So just by using the term "temporary"  
3 or -- I mean, words have meaning, and I can't tell you that  
4 "temporary" is the key word. Benghazi was, in fact, a  
5 temporary facility, because you have a temporary facility  
6 that is in fact a diplomatic mission, sure, so we're  
7 starting -- we can get into some of those issues as well. So  
8 I don't want to split hairs over terminology. To me, it's  
9 the principle.

10 Q Okay. And then just staying in that same thread  
11 and just following up on that, I wanted to point to page 30,  
12 and there's a section here that I'll read. It's at the  
13 bottom of the page, it's the last paragraph that starts with,  
14 "Another key driver."

15 And I just want to point out this because you just  
16 talked about the difference between a temporary and  
17 nondiplomatic, and so let me just read this particular  
18 passage. Quote, "Another key driver behind the weak security  
19 platform in Benghazi was the decision to treat Benghazi as a  
20 temporary, residential facility, not officially notified to  
21 the host government even though it was also a full-time  
22 office facility. This resulted in the Special Mission  
23 compound being excepted from office facility standards and  
24 accountability under the Secure Embassy Construction  
25 Counterterrorism Act of 1999 (SECCA) and the Overseas

1 Security Policy Board (OSPB). Benghazi's initial platform in  
2 November 2011 was far short of OSPB standards and remained so  
3 even in September 2012, despite multiple field-expedient  
4 upgrades funded by DS."

5 Would you have anything to add to that?

6 A Yeah. And, I mean, all this is just off the cuff  
7 and without having time to really think. And, again, this is  
8 very technical, so, you know, looking at words like this, one  
9 might want to go look at some of these acts and look at these  
10 FAMs.

11 But if you're going to have a nondiplomatic facility, a  
12 pretty key consideration that I learned through this is does  
13 it talk about -- and, again, it may somewhere else in the  
14 document, I'm not sure -- does it talk about the fact that,  
15 you know, does designating it as a nonofficial compound, did  
16 that make the Government of Libya not responsible for  
17 security. I mean, that's one of those key issues that I  
18 raised with that. And I don't see that in this. I don't see  
19 that addressed. Maybe it's somewhere else, if we can find  
20 it.

21 So, I mean, there's a lot of subcategories of this and  
22 considerations. So, yeah, in general terms this kind of  
23 captures some of this. But, again, I have a feeling that  
24 this could have been more -- there's more considerations as  
25 well.

1 BY MS. SAWYER:

2 Q So I just want to follow up on that, because one  
3 thing you mentioned specifically was a concern that you felt  
4 the mission had not been notified to the host nation. Now,  
5 that was also a finding consistent that the ARB just said  
6 right there.

7 A Yeah.

8 Q So you agree with that finding?

9 A But what are the consequences of that?

10 Q I think they lay them out here. One of the  
11 consequences was it meant that it didn't comply with -- well,  
12 that one consequence may have been that, you said, there may  
13 not have been sufficient host nation support. The ARB did  
14 find --

15 A That's not what I said, though. What I said was a  
16 legal obligation under international law.

17 Q Okay.

18 A Big distinction. Because one of the issues that's  
19 been raised with this is, even if they were, was there even a  
20 Government of Libya to take responsibility, which is a  
21 totally separate question, because if you have an entity  
22 that's being considered the Government of Libya, even if,  
23 again, you're in that gray area in terms of who they are and  
24 what their capabilities are.

25 And, again, I'm not a lawyer, but I will speculate on

1       this based on my experience. If the Government of Libya  
2       knows that under international law they have a responsibility  
3       and there's very limited resources to go around, I would hope  
4       that that might push them to give me a little more of their  
5       limited responsibilities. If they're not and the resources  
6       are very limited, maybe that means us getting a little bit  
7       less. Again, I'm not qualified to speak --

8           Q     So let me just -- because I am curious, because I  
9       guess I misunderstood you, because you were very concerned  
10      about parsing the words here. I mean, my question to you is  
11      --- setting aside whether there was a legal obligation or not  
12      does not seem to me the core question. If that helps a  
13      government provide what we need, great.

14           But wasn't the concern that you expressed was that we  
15      weren't getting sufficient host nation support at the end of  
16      the day, whether or not -- and there may have been a number  
17      of reasons. One may have been that they weren't taking  
18      seriously a legal obligation. One may have been that they  
19      had a lack of capacity. I think the ARB speaks to a number  
20      of the reasons why we did not get sufficient host nation  
21      support.

22           And so I guess what I'm having -- I am really in some  
23      ways imploring you to help us do is to figure out -- you've  
24      made a lot of very generalized statements about the need to  
25      further investigate, and we want to make sure that this



1 eighth congressional investigation uses whatever time and  
2 whatever resources we have to actually get at things that  
3 haven't already been investigated.

4 So I understand we're asking you a tough task, because  
5 you just said to us you read this in December of 2012,  
6 probably when it came out, but you've now come before us and  
7 you've suggested that things weren't adequately investigated.

8 A Yes.

9 Q So you did read the ARB report, you acknowledged  
10 earlier today that you had not participated in the Best  
11 Practice Panel. Were you aware of the Best Practice Panel  
12 that was convened as a result of the ARB to do an additional  
13 investigation?

14 A I don't believe so.

15 Q So you have not read the Best Practice Panel  
16 report?

17 A Like I said, who was on the Best Practice Panel? I  
18 mean, who --

19 Q Yeah.

20 A Was that the Department?

21 Q Todd Keil.

22 Mr. Woolfork. Todd Keil.

23 Ms. Sawyer. Do you know who Mr. Keil is?

24 Mr. Woolfork. Director --

25 Mr. Craig. I'm sorry. I can't hear you.

1 Mr. Woolfork. So Todd Keil, who was the cochair, he was  
2 formerly with the State Department, as well as Director  
3 Sullivan, former Director of the Secret Service --

4 Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

5 Mr. Woolfork. -- were the two heads. Mr. Sullivan was  
6 the head of the panel.

7 Mr. [REDACTED] I don't recall that, no. Like I said,  
8 other than the ARB, nobody's ever spoken to me about anything  
9 about Benghazi.

10 Ms. Sawyer. Right. Understood. No one has spoken  
11 directly with you.

12 Mr. [REDACTED] But, I mean, I think -- I understand  
13 what you're saying, but I -- I understand it's a fine point,  
14 but it's an important point, that there is a difference. If  
15 I'm being asked is the Government of Libya providing  
16 adequate -- providing adequate security, I mean, that's a  
17 subjective term, but whether or not they're legally obligated  
18 to is not as. So, I mean, that's a little more objective.

19 And it is important [REDACTED]

20 [REDACTED] I'm sure

21 [REDACTED] providing us security and probably pretty good

22 security, because we have a good relationship [REDACTED]

23 and they have a good security apparatus. To me, that would

24 be a key consideration to know concretely are they obligated

25 to protect us under international law or are they doing this.

1 as a favor to us or are they doing this as a best effort to  
2 help us, which could go away at any time. That's a valid  
3 question and a valid concern, and I can't give you the answer  
4 to that right now.

5 And so, again, yeah, that consequence -- I mean, I agree  
6 in general terms with this paragraph, but that was a  
7 consequence that wasn't pointed out. And, again, I haven't  
8 been responsible for having anything to do with this report  
9 or studied up or making comments or analyzing this, so it  
10 would raise my question as to what other consequences may not  
11 be pointed out. So it's not -- to me it's not are there good  
12 things in here, but are there things that could be here that  
13 aren't here. And so to me, I still have some open questions  
14 on that.

15 Ms. Sawyer. Well, that's what I'm wondering, what  
16 specifically are those open questions?

17 Mr. Craig. You know what? We'd have to look at this  
18 and provide you an analysis. He hasn't looked at this since  
19 December. And to ask him where the, I think, the  
20 shortcomings -- if you want to ask about specific passages, I  
21 think that's fair, but to have him present a wholesale  
22 analysis, I think, would not be fair.

23 Ms. Sawyer. Okay.

24 Mr. [REDACTED]. What I -- what I -- I mean, maybe --  
25 well, maybe this would help, in terms of it's a 31-page

1 document, it's written in -- I'm sure it's been highly  
2 scrutinized by lawyers and others. So, again, I wouldn't  
3 want to speak to a specific sentence or a specific line. But  
4 coming out of the ARB, you look at how it's written, and  
5 people can, you know, parse words about what something means  
6 or doesn't mean, but if we look at outcomes, what has DS done  
7 or implemented because of this, again, to me and to others  
8 raises some concerns about whether or not the right lessons  
9 were learned from this document and they've made it into the  
10 implementation process.

11 BY MS. SAWYER:

12 Q So currently there's an inspector general  
13 compliance review that is ongoing about whether or not, of  
14 the 29 recommendations made by the Accountability Review  
15 Board -- we've held two hearings on this topic in this  
16 committee on implementation of the Accountability Review  
17 Board. There's an ongoing, current, right now compliance  
18 review. I would strongly encourage -- I understand and I did  
19 ask you a very difficult task. And to the extent I asked it,  
20 it's because, again, I understand what you're saying, that  
21 you have concerns that maybe there wasn't enough  
22 investigation.

23 We are charged with the responsibility, unlike you, for  
24 having read every single one of those reports, for trying to  
25 understand what hasn't been investigated. And so I was

1 imploring you for your help in helping us identify that.  
2 Because I understand what you're saying. I do believe it was  
3 not the case that there wasn't an obligation. I think the  
4 obligation was not fulfilled in terms of host nation support.  
5 And I think that was identified as a critical failure and one  
6 that was not taken seriously enough by the ARB --

7 A Yes.

8 Q -- and that some of the other things that you  
9 identified very clearly, about the failure to meet OSPB  
10 standards, also has been identified.

11 So I think part of what we were trying to help us  
12 understand was with a lot of the specific deficiencies you  
13 identified, they have been discussed.

14 A Can I ask you a question?

15 Q Yes, please.

16 A And, again, this is not at all me being  
17 argumentative about things the Department has done. This is  
18 a legitimate question that a lot of people, including myself,  
19 still don't have a clear answer on. If you have an  
20 unaccredited facility and you have unaccredited personnel  
21 there, what are the legal obligations of the host government?

22 Q I'm not sure I understand what you're talking  
23 about, unaccredited. That we are not a diplomatic mission?

24 A The mission is not a -- the host government has not  
25 been notified that this is a diplomatic facility by the

1 various means that the Department does that under  
2 international law and that the diplomats who are serving  
3 there are not accredited diplomats.

4 Q Well, I am not certain that that was true the  
5 entire time that we were in Libya. There was a period of  
6 time when our Embassy was not up and running.

7 A No. It's a key distinction. I'm talking about the  
8 mission in Benghazi.

9 Q All of those people were recognized as diplomats.

10 A In Tripoli, not Benghazi.

11 Q Right. The facility versus the persons, I think,  
12 are two different distinctions.

13 A As far as I was told, we were not accredited  
14 diplomats in Tripoli.

15 Q I'm not sure who you were told that by, but it  
16 would help to know who told you that, when you were told  
17 that, and if that's what you were told was the reason you  
18 were not able to get resources.

19 A In fact, yeah, I do not believe we were accredited  
20 diplomats in Libya.

21 Q Libya.

22 A And, again, that's a very, very legitimate  
23 question. It's a relatively easy one to answer. And it's  
24 been an answer that's been very difficult to get.

25 Q Who have you asked that question of?

1           A     In IP, [REDACTED] and various other people in IP,  
2     what our status was. And [REDACTED] told me this, [REDACTED]  
3     [REDACTED] told me when he's been in meetings, broader State  
4     Department and they were talking about the security dilemma  
5     that we were in, [REDACTED] said, and he didn't tell me who  
6     had brought it up, but he said, it's been brought up that  
7     should we even consider them chief of mission personnel.  
8     That was an open question at points, are they even chief of  
9     mission. And chief of mission doesn't mean accredited  
10    diplomat. I mean, so that's even a lower level of who we  
11    were. That was apparently brought up.

12           So in the desire to be constructive and maybe do  
13    something constructive with this, because this is a lot of  
14    information to go through, a concern I have with this and how  
15    it's been implemented are -- and, again, I'm not alone in  
16    feeling like this -- a lot of recommendations have come -- a  
17    lot of implementation has come out of these recommendations,  
18    and some of us question how relevant they are to  
19    expeditionary diplomacy. And give you a couple examples.

20           Out of this, we created and Congress funded some  
21    30-some-odd Marine Security Guard detachments. There were  
22    questions brought up during various hearings about, you know,  
23    where were the marines and this had come up.

24           So a takeaway from this was more marines. So Congress  
25    funded 36 more detachments. That's a lot of money, that's a

1 lot of marines. And those marines went places like Juba, the  
2 Embassy, not the provincial areas; Hanoi; Casablanca; some  
3 other places.

4 If Benghazi were to repeat itself today, how many  
5 marines would be in Benghazi? Zero. Not a single marine  
6 would be in Benghazi. Because it's not a diplomatic  
7 facility, you can't put Marine Security Guards. The DOD can  
8 send marines from the fleet in with the permission of the  
9 Government of Libya, but you could not put Marine Security  
10 Guards in Benghazi if it happened again today.

11 How many Marine Security Guards can you put in [REDACTED]  
12 [REDACTED]? None. You can't put any. And that's not a  
13 knock, and I'm happy that the -- you know, we got 36 new  
14 marine detachments. They serve a vital function. At a lot  
15 of consulates, official consulates and official embassies,  
16 some of them up to now did not have Marine Security Guard  
17 detachments. It's great that some of those have those now,  
18 because that's an extra layer of security that they now have,  
19 but in terms of doing expeditionary diplomacy, you can't use  
20 Marine Security Guards outside of the embassy or the  
21 consulate grounds.

22 May I continue or --

23 Q Umm --

24 A Well, I can talk about a few other. So that's a  
25 valid question, is that was one of the outcomes of this, and



1 a lot of us question it wouldn't have done anything to help  
2 in Benghazi.

3 Q Yeah. No. I understand that. It's also my  
4 understanding there's other options besides Marine Security  
5 Guards. And the committee has been briefed on the placement  
6 of those guards. So I'm just torn about -- I understand what  
7 you're saying.

8 I think part of the difficulty here is we have different  
9 windows on information. We've read the classified version of  
10 the ARB. You have not. We've read a number of these others.  
11 So I don't want to belabor the process. I understand what  
12 your concerns are. And I'm just trying to figure out if  
13 there are avenues that we continue to need to explore,  
14 without taking a lot of your time right here and now.

15 So I do think I would take your lawyer up on the offer  
16 for you to follow up by letter, to the extent that you think  
17 there are particular avenues for the committee that we need  
18 to explore, so that we can see that and assess what we do  
19 already know, without taking more time now. So we would  
20 definitely take you up on that offer.

21 But while we do have you here, because you had asked  
22 some specific -- you had said some specific things that we  
23 just thought -- and, again, what we might hear from you or  
24 your counsel is that you would prefer not to tell us now.  
25 But you had indicated that you reached out to the ARB, you

1 felt like they might not interview you, so you then  
2 immediately followed up to give them reasons why they should.  
3 Do you know of any other single person who did volunteer to  
4 speak to the ARB that they failed to speak to?

5 A I would want to -- before, I would want to confirm  
6 that -- but I believe so, yes.

7 Q Okay. So if you could let us know who those people  
8 are, that would be helpful.

9 And you indicated that during -- you know, that the ARB  
10 environment was intimidating. I think it's possible that  
11 Congress created the ARB to help it be less intimidating by  
12 setting it outside the structure of -- to create  
13 independence.

14 A Well, I didn't say that the ARB itself was  
15 intimidating.

16 Mr. Craig. That's not right.

17 Mr. [REDACTED] That's not correct.

18 Ms. Sawyer. Okay.

19 Mr. Craig. That's not right.

20 Mr. [REDACTED]. I mean, the ARB was actually not  
21 intimidating. It was fine. What I said was the --

22 Ms. Sawyer. Okay. My mistake.

23 Mr. [REDACTED] -- the atmosphere in Diplomatic Security  
24 surrounding the ARB was intimidating.

25

1 BY MS. SAWYER:

2 Q And the example you gave us of that was Deputy  
3 Lamb?

4 A Deputy Assistant Secretary for International  
5 Programs and Diplomatic Security telling us, I'm not telling  
6 you to not cooperate with the ARB investigation, but -- and  
7 then telling us to be very careful about how we answer the  
8 questions from the ARB and from investigators about this.

9 Q So did anyone else express to you that they were  
10 not going to speak to the ARB because of what Ms. Lamb said?

11 A I didn't ask anybody.

12 Q Did anyone volunteer that to you?

13 A No.

14 Q And you, yourself, chose to speak to the ARB  
15 despite what she had said?

16 A I chose to speak to the ARB despite what she said,  
17 yes. I also knew that, because I had no idea what the  
18 process was going to be, and knowing that I was probably  
19 going to be one of the few agents who spoke, that there was  
20 the possibility for facing some retaliation if it was known  
21 that I was pushing myself on the ARB to speak. That's what I  
22 personally felt.

23 Q And have you suffered any retaliation for having  
24 spoken to the ARB?

25 A I have not.

1           Q     You know, you said that you have become more  
2     aggressive since, and not to put words, I think that's how  
3     you put it, that you have been more vocal about concerns  
4     since your experience in Benghazi. Have you suffered any  
5     retaliation for that, for being more aggressive?

6           A     I have not.

7           Q     Are you alleging today that you are in fear of  
8     retaliation or you have suffered any retaliation at the  
9     Department?

10          A     As of today, I have not suffered retaliation  
11     because of the Department, but as of today I cannot speak for  
12     whether or not I will face any retaliation after my testimony  
13     today.

14          Q     But to date, you've been in DS since 2009 --

15          A     Uh-huh.

16          Q     -- you have not suffered any retaliation?

17          A     No.

18          Mr. Craig. Could I make a clarifying point about the  
19     witness's attitude towards the ARB, because I think you may  
20     be misunderstanding it. And if I'm wrong, you correct me.  
21     But my understanding is that he's not generally critical of  
22     the ARB. To the extent he has some concerns it has to do  
23     with implementation. But by and large he was very positive  
24     about the way he was handled by the ARB.

25          Ms. Sawyer. Yeah.

1           Mr. Craig. The report that was made was accurate, he  
2       said. So I think if there's a misconception here, I'd like  
3       to clear it up. His role here is not to be critical of the  
4       ARB.

5                   BY MS. SAWYER:

6           Q     I mean, do you agree with that. If that's the  
7       case, at times it felt --

8           A     My --

9           Q     But if that's the case, then absolutely clarify  
10      that.

11          A     My role is maybe a little bit broader than that.  
12      My view is that the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and the  
13      Department of State have not done a thorough investigation  
14      about Benghazi, because they rely on the existence of the ARB  
15      as the be all, end all, and since we have the ARB, there's no  
16      need for us to do anything else, there's no need to talk to  
17      anybody else, because we have the ARB.

18          And the ARB, I would say, is insufficient in terms of  
19      getting a real deep dive into a lot of the issues that  
20      surrounded Benghazi. There are some good attributes about  
21      the ARB. And, in fact, the ARB would have some things in it  
22      that a deep dive that DS would do would not have.

23          So I think in a perfect world you would have an ARB and  
24      you would have this deep dive by Diplomatic Security. I  
25      think what that probably would have done is -- I would make

1 the argument that a lot of the outcomes of the ARB are  
2 inadequate and don't reflect the failings of Benghazi. If  
3 you had had this in conjunction with a deep dive from  
4 Diplomatic Security, I think you would have had a much better  
5 chance of marrying up the appropriate outcomes with things  
6 that would actually have prevented Benghazi or helped it in  
7 the future. So that would be my take on the ARB.

8 And, you know, you asked if anybody who wanted to speak  
9 to the ARB wasn't spoken to. Recollection, I believe, yes,  
10 that people did respond and were never contacted. But I  
11 would also say that, you know, there were -- when comments  
12 were made by Deputy Assistant Secretary Lamb and others, that  
13 there were people who were happy not to be contacted by the  
14 ARB, who maybe didn't reach out themselves, because just,  
15 especially after what had been said by DAS Lamb, I personally  
16 felt that the mere fact of reaching out to the ARB ahead of  
17 time potentially put one in a position where they could be  
18 retaliated against.

19 And you asked if I had been retaliated against after  
20 that. I have not. A lot of scrutiny's been placed on  
21 people, and a lot of the people that may have retaliated  
22 suffered adverse consequences and maybe weren't in a position  
23 to do so. But it was not at all clear how that was going to  
24 play itself out.

25 So I felt at the time that by volunteering myself to the

1       ARB it definitely raised the possible that I might face  
2       adverse consequences. I didn't, and I'm thankful for that,  
3       but there may have been other people at the time who still  
4       felt that way and never contacted the ARB because of it, and  
5       the ARB was not going to contact them.

6               So, again, that's a lot of speculation and we can't tell  
7       what would have happened had something else not happened, but  
8       that's how I felt. And, again, I would go back to I never --  
9       I should not have felt that way and I should not have, you  
10      know, been told the things that I was told by senior  
11      management at that time. I felt that was highly  
12      inappropriate.

13             Q       And when you talked about it earlier, you said that  
14      you read it a particular way and that you felt it was a  
15      message of intimidation. And, again, did anyone else express  
16      to you that they had felt it was a message of intimidation?  
17      Just understanding that people can hear --

18             A       Yeah.

19             Q       -- what someone says in different ways. I mean,  
20      it's possible she thought she was telling people that they  
21      should feel free to talk to the ARB, not that they shouldn't.  
22      And I understand that's not how you read it, but did anyone  
23      else express to you that they felt that Ms. Lamb had told  
24      them not to speak to the ARB?

25             A       I talked to several people about it after it in the

1 office, and I can't put a particular word in somebody's  
2 mouth, but everybody I talked to took it, you know, in  
3 general terms the same way, that, you know, how galling of  
4 Charlene Lamb to say that, that this was clearly designed  
5 to -- that it was shocking that a law enforcement official  
6 would say that to a room of law enforcement professionals.  
7 That was the consensus from, you know, four or five people  
8 that I spoke with immediately after I left my office.

9 I can't put individual words into their mouths, that  
10 they used the word "intimidation" or didn't, but I don't  
11 think anybody that I talked to thought for a second that that  
12 was encouragement to go out and feel free to speak to anybody  
13 about this. But I'll only speak to my own feeling.

14 Q Fair enough. And you don't have any specific  
15 examples of anyone to share with us?

16 A Off the top of my head, no, I don't want to do  
17 that. I could try to --

18 Mr. Craig. You have to say something.

19 Mr. [REDACTED] Hmm?

20 Mr. Craig. You can't just nod your head.

21 Ms. Sawyer. Right. I was just --

22 Mr. [REDACTED] No. Sorry.

23 Ms. Sawyer. -- signaling that you've got to give a  
24 verbal response.

25 Mr. [REDACTED]. At this time, no. Sorry.



1           Ms. Sawyer. Okay. No. Not a worry.

2           Can we go off the record just for a sec? Because I  
3 think we just have a couple other things.

4           [Discussion off the record.]

5           Ms. Sawyer. So we just have a few more questions. My  
6 colleague's going to ask them. And these, he'll introduce  
7 them to you. But, you know, part of what I, you know,  
8 pressed you fairly hard on, and I appreciate your forbearance  
9 and patience, is us really trying to figure out what we need  
10 to focus on and what allegations out there really haven't  
11 been fully explored.

12           So we're going to ask you a number of allegations that  
13 have been made in the public domain over the past 2-1/2  
14 years. Some of them will not be necessarily in your avenue  
15 of firsthand knowledge, but what we are seeking is kind of  
16 whatever evidence or firsthand knowledge you might have about  
17 several of these allegations.

18           With that, I don't know if you had more, Brent.

19           Mr. Woolfork. No. And I'll attempt to go through these  
20 pretty expeditiously.

21           Mr. Craig. And this is firsthand knowledge you're  
22 asking him?

23           Ms. Sawyer. Yes, if he has firsthand knowledge or  
24 evidence of any of the allegations.

25           Mr. [REDACTED] Is this a set list or are these things

1       that you think are specific to me or is this --

2       Ms. Sawyer. They're not specific to you necessarily.

3       Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

4       Ms. Sawyer. Some of them will come within potentially  
5       your realm of knowledge, some of them may not. But, again,  
6       these are allegations that have persisted, and they are, you  
7       know, kind of questions that this committee has been asked to  
8       answer, among others. So we are just asking the people who  
9       come before the committee if they have firsthand knowledge or  
10      evidence. So --

11      Mr. Woolfork. So we have asked these of previous  
12      witnesses.

13      Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

14      Mr. Craig. Firsthand knowledge or evidence about the  
15      allegation --

16      Ms. Sawyer. Yes.

17      Mr. Craig. -- related to --

18      Ms. Sawyer. And if you have any questions about any of  
19      them, obviously you'll just ask us and we'll talk about them.  
20      So --

21      Mr. Craig. All right.

22      BY MR. WOOLFORK:

23      Q     So let me start. It has been alleged that  
24      Secretary of State Clinton intentionally blocked military  
25      action on the night of the attacks. One Congressman has

1        speculated that, quote, "Secretary Clinton told Leon Panetta  
2        to stand down," end quote, and this resulted in the Defense  
3        Department not sending more assets to help in Benghazi.

4        Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State Clinton  
5        ordered Secretary of Defense Panetta to, quote, "stand down"  
6        on the night of the attacks?

7        A     I have nothing to add about what happened on the  
8        day of the attack.

9        Q     Do you have any evidence that Secretary of State  
10       Clinton issued any kind of order to Secretary of Defense  
11       Panetta on the night of the attacks?

12       A     No.

13       Q     It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
14       personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security to  
15       Libya. The Washington Post Fact Checker evaluated this claim  
16       and gave it, quote, "four Pinocchios," its highest award for  
17       false claims.

18       Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton  
19       personally signed an April 2012 cable denying security  
20       resources to Libya?

21       A     No.

22       Q     Do you have any evidence that Secretary Clinton was  
23       personally involved in providing specific instruction on  
24       day-to-day security resources in Benghazi?

25       A     No.

1 Q It has been alleged that Secretary Clinton  
2 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
3 by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for  
4 military operations in Libya in spring 2011.

5 Do you have any evidence Secretary Clinton  
6 misrepresented or fabricated intelligence on the risk posed  
7 by Qadhafi to his own people in order to garner support for  
8 military operations in Libya in spring 2011?

9 A No.

10 Q It has been alleged that the U.S. Mission in  
11 Benghazi included transferring weapons to Syrian rebels or to  
12 other countries. A bipartisan report issued by the House  
13 Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence found that, quote,  
14 "The CIA was not collecting and shipping arms from Libya to  
15 Syria," end quote, and that they found, quote, "no support  
16 for this allegation," end quote.

17 Do you have any evidence to contradict the House  
18 Intelligence Committee's bipartisan report finding that the  
19 CIA was not shipping arms from Libya to Syria?

20 A Can I go off the record for a second?

21 Ms. Sawyer. Sure. Yes.

22 Mr. [REDACTED] Okay.

23 Ms. Sawyer. I mean --

24 Mr. Beattie. Off the record.

25 [Discussion off the record.]

1  
2 Mr. [REDACTED] No.

3 Mr. Craig. That "no" was for the record.

4 Mr. [REDACTED] No was for the record.

5 BY MR. WOOLFORK:

6 Q So second question, follow-up to that, is do you  
7 have any evidence that the U.S. facilities in Benghazi were  
8 being used to facilitate weapons transfers from Libya to  
9 Syria or to any other foreign country?

10 A No.

11 Q A team of CIA security personnel was temporarily  
12 delayed from departing the Annex to assist the Special  
13 Mission Compound. There have been a number of allegations  
14 about the cause of and the appropriateness of that delay.

15 The House Intelligence Committee issued a bipartisan  
16 report concluding that the team was not ordered to, quote,  
17 "stand down," but that instead there were tactical  
18 disagreements on the ground over how quickly to depart.

19 Do you have any evidence that would contradict the House  
20 Intelligence Committee's finding that there was no stand-down  
21 order to CIA personnel?

22 A I have no evidence or information about this.

23 Q Putting aside whether you personally agree with the  
24 decision to delay temporarily or think it was the right  
25 decision, do you have any evidence that there was a, quote

1 "bad or improper reason" behind the temporary delay of the  
2 CIA security personnel who departed the Annex to assist the  
3 Special Mission Compound?

4 A No.

5 Q A concern has been raised by one individual that in  
6 the course of producing documents to the Accountability  
7 Review Board damaging documents may have been removed or  
8 scrubbed out of that production.

9 Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
10 Department removed or, quote, "scrubbed" damaging documents  
11 from the materials that were provided to the ARB?

12 A I have no evidence of that, no.

13 Q Do you have any evidence that anyone at the State  
14 Department directed anyone else at the State Department to  
15 remove or scrub damaging documents from the materials that  
16 were provided to the ARB?

17 A No.

18 Q Let me ask these questions also for documents that  
19 were provided to Congress. Do you have any evidence that  
20 anyone at the State Department removed or scrubbed damaging  
21 documents from the materials that were provided to Congress?

22 A No.

23 Q It's been alleged that CIA Deputy Director Michael  
24 Morell altered unclassified talking points about the Benghazi  
25 attacks for political reasons and that he then misrepresented

1 his actions when he told Congress that the CIA, quote,  
2 "faithfully performed our duties in accordance with the  
3 highest standards of objectivity and nonpartisanship," end  
4 quote.

5 Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director Mike  
6 Morell gave false or intentionally misleading testimony to  
7 Congress about the Benghazi talking points?

8 A No.

9 Q Do you have any evidence that CIA Deputy Director  
10 Morell altered the talking points provided to Congress for  
11 political reasons?

12 A No.

13 Q It's been alleged that Ambassador Susan Rice made  
14 an, quote, "intentional misrepresentation," end quote, when  
15 she spoke on the Sunday talks shows about the Benghazi  
16 attacks.

17 Do you have any evidence that Ambassador Rice  
18 intentionally misrepresented facts about the Benghazi attacks  
19 on the Sunday talk shows?

20 A No.

21 Q It's been alleged that the President of the United  
22 States was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in Chief,"  
23 end quote, on the night of the attacks and that he was,  
24 quote, "missing in action," end quote.

25 Do you have any evidence to support the allegation that

1 the President was, quote, "virtually AWOL as Commander in  
2 Chief," end quote, or missing in action on the night of the  
3 attacks?

4 A No.

5 Q It's been alleged that a team of four military  
6 personnel at Embassy Tripoli on the night of the attacks who  
7 were considering flying on the second plane to Benghazi were  
8 ordered by their superiors to stand down, meaning to cease  
9 all operations. Military officials have stated that those  
10 four individuals were instead ordered to, quote, "remain in  
11 place" in Tripoli to provide security and medical assistance  
12 in their current location.

13 A Republican staff report issued by the House Armed  
14 Services Committee found that, quote, "There was no  
15 stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli  
16 who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote.

17 Do you have any evidence to contradict the conclusion of  
18 the House Armed Services Committee that, quote, "There was no  
19 stand-down order issued to U.S. military personnel in Tripoli  
20 who sought to join the fight in Benghazi," end quote?

21 A No.

22 Q It's been alleged that the military failed to  
23 deploy assets on the night of the attacks that would have  
24 saved lives. However --

25 Mr. Craig. Failed to do what?



1 Mr. Woolfork. That would have save lives.

2 Mr. Craig. No. Failed to do what, deploy?

3 Mr. Woolfork. It's been alleged that the military  
4 failed to deploy assets --

5 Mr. Craig. Thank you.

6 Mr. Woolfork. -- on the night of the attacks that would  
7 have saved lives. However, former Republican Congressman  
8 Howard "Buck" McKeon, the former chairman of the House Armed  
9 Services Committee, conducted a review of the attacks, after  
10 which he stated, quote, "Given where the troops were, how  
11 quickly the thing all happened, and how quickly it  
12 dissipated, we probably couldn't have done more than we did,"  
13 end quote.

14 Do you have any evidence to contradict Congressman  
15 McKeon's conclusion?

16 A No.

17 Q Do you have any evidence that the Pentagon had  
18 military assets available to them on the night of the attacks  
19 that could have saved lives but that the Pentagon leadership  
20 intentionally decided not to deploy?

21 A No.

22 Mr. Woolfork. Thank you.

23 Ms. Sawyer. I think that's it for us. I think our  
24 colleagues may have had one or two follow-up questions.

25 Mr. Beattie. Yes.

1 BY MR. BEATTIE:

2 Q So just two substantive questions to finish up.

3 One, are you aware of any State Department employees  
4 and/or contractors employed by the State Department that may  
5 have been operating in Libya, whether Tripoli or Benghazi or  
6 elsewhere in Libya, working on issues related to MANPADS?

7 A Could you say that question again?

8 Q Sure. Are you aware of any State Department  
9 employees or State Department contractors employed by the  
10 State Department working in Libya on issues related to  
11 MANPADS?

12 A State Department?

13 Q Yes.

14 Mr. Craig. And you know what MANPADS is?

15 Mr. [REDACTED] Yes. I'm just trying to think before I

16 --

17 Mr. Beattie. Take your time. You can go off the record  
18 if you want.

19 [Discussion off the record.]

20 BY MR. BEATTIE:

21 Q And the answer is?

22 A No.

23 Q And then one last question. The Best Practices  
24 Panel, which I know you weren't familiar with at the time, we  
25 have read the report. One of the recommendations that came

1 out of that panel was setting up a separate, I believe,  
2 assistant secretary for security. In other words, moving DS  
3 out from under the management --

4 A You mean under secretary or --

5 Q Yes. Sorry. Under secretary for security,  
6 precisely.

7 One of the motivations for that recommendation, if you  
8 look at the report, is to try and separate security in the  
9 State Department, decisions about security, from diplomatic  
10 or policy decisions.

11 From your perspective and from your experience as a DS  
12 agent, is that a concern of yours, that in the State  
13 Department security-related decisions sometimes are subsumed  
14 by policy or diplomatic decisions, whether it's how things  
15 look to a host nation or how things are perceived in a  
16 diplomatic way, security-related decisions?

17 A Yes. That's very much a concern.

18 Q Could you elaborate on that at all, from your  
19 perspective.

20 A The fact that Diplomatic Security reports to the  
21 Under Secretary of Management puts the Assistant Secretary  
22 for Diplomatic Security in a very difficult situation.

23 We are a law enforcement and a security agency, but our  
24 decisions -- off the record for a second?

25 [Discussion off the record.]

1           Mr. [REDACTED] No. I wholeheartedly agree with that  
2 recommendation. My experience in the Department has been  
3 that when you are trying to balance policy with risk, with  
4 resources, what I've seen, it's a little bit lopsided. We  
5 need a quality presentation to decisionmakers in terms of how  
6 they are going to evaluate those, and I don't think we have  
7 that right now.

8           So I think security to some extent is a little bit on a  
9 lower pedestal because of the fact that it goes through the  
10 Under Secretary of Management. And I think that Diplomatic  
11 Security, you know, is not able to fully express its views in  
12 that policy climate in the way we would be able to if we were  
13 more independent and had our own under secretary that could  
14 sort of have that discussion at that level.

15           Just personal experience, I have worked outside of  
16 Diplomatic Security in CSO, in the J Bureau, and just my  
17 personal experience has been that I, as a junior, even  
18 midlevel Diplomatic Security special agent have literally  
19 zero contact with the Assistant Secretary. In other bureaus,  
20 I see assistant secretaries who are, you know, managing  
21 day-to-day operational issues within their units.

22           So when we have -- you know, I would never be  
23 discussing -- and this is to the detriment of the  
24 organization. I have no line of communication with the  
25 Assistant Secretary. We are doing something like Benghazi,

1 as sensitive and important as that is, I am just dealing with  
2 the next level above me.

3 When I am over in CSO, I have a direct line of  
4 communication to the Assistant Secretary for CSO, and he is  
5 involved in day-to-day operations of how many people, who  
6 they're doing, what they're doing.

7 So in terms of weight, it's not usually, you know, an  
8 equal distribution in terms of how we make those balances.  
9 So I would wholeheartedly recommend -- agree with that  
10 recommendation.

11 BY MR. BEATTIE:

12 Q And just to be clear for the record, when you said  
13 in your experience you didn't have day-to-day contact with  
14 the Assistant Secretary, you are referring to within  
15 Diplomatic Security the Assistant Secretary?

16 A The Assistant Secretary with Diplomatic Security.

17 Q Okay.

18 A Yeah. So the same issue at the same level in  
19 Diplomatic Security, I would be addressing, you know, with a  
20 midlevel person. In another bureau it would be being  
21 addressed directly by an Assistant Secretary.

22 So it's a different level of working on the same level  
23 problem in the field, and I think that DS would benefit  
24 greatly. And I think by DS benefiting, the Department would  
25 benefit if we had a little more independence in terms of

1 addressing that on sort of a more coequal level. So I would  
2 agree with that recommendation.

3 Q Very helpful. Thank you.

4 And just finally, anything else that you would like to  
5 share with us before we conclude?

6 Mr. Craig. I think we owe you a couple of things.

7 Maybe we could review the to-do list and be complete here.

8 Ms. Sawyer. Sure.

9 And so before we go off the record, I do want to express  
10 my appreciation, the committee's appreciation, the Members'  
11 appreciation for you coming in voluntarily to the committee  
12 and sharing your experience and your knowledge with us. We  
13 do very much appreciate it.

14 You know, to the extent we can streamline any follow-up  
15 we will do so and make it as easy as possible, because we do  
16 appreciate you coming forward and helping us out with this  
17 investigation. So thank you for what has been a few hours of  
18 your day. And we will just -- we can go off the record and  
19 talk about --

20 Mr. Beattie. I'm sorry. Actually, before you go off  
21 the record, I just want to thank you also on behalf of  
22 Chairman Gowdy for coming in voluntarily today. We really  
23 appreciate your time and your service. Thank you very much.

24 Mr. [REDACTED]. No, thank you.

25 Mr. Craig. I know you both have said "voluntarily."

1 But may I say that we view this appearance as compelled,  
2 because he was under the impression that it was very likely  
3 that if he didn't come he would likely get a subpoena.  
4 Whether or not he would have come without a subpoena is a  
5 different question. But we'd like to tell you that he's here  
6 because he was anticipating that if he didn't come he would  
7 probably get a subpoena.

8 Mr. Beattie. Understood.

9 Mr. Craig. Is that right?

10 Mr. [REDACTED]. Yes.

11 Ms. Sawyer. Well, I do want to make clear for the  
12 record that thus far the ranking member has been very clear  
13 that we haven't had someone who has said they would not  
14 appear voluntarily. But the ranking member takes very  
15 seriously the concerns that an individual might express.

16 So I'm sorry that that was the impression that was left.  
17 I don't know who left the impression.

18 Mr. [REDACTED]. I believe I would have to check. I  
19 believe it was the email from Assistant Secretary Starr to  
20 those of us that were going to be asked that it was  
21 voluntary, but if we didn't volunteer, very good chance there  
22 would be a subpoena.

23 Mr. Craig. It's in the email.

24 Mr. [REDACTED]. I believe -- I'd have to double-check,  
25 I'm not looking at it -- but that was my recollection.

1           Ms. Sawyer. Yes. And it is possible that the State  
2 Department was told that the committee would -- the chairman  
3 would compel testimony.

4           Mr. Craig. That's the reason.

5           Ms. Clarke. I'm not privy to those conversations. But  
6 from your understanding it's that any compelling of your  
7 testimony came from your understanding of the email from the  
8 State Department?

9           Mr. Craig. Not from the committee.

10          Ms. Clarke. Thank you. And I just would leave it at  
11 that.

12          Mr. Craig. If he had this understanding, it was from  
13 the Department. But that clearly was his understanding.

14          Ms. Clarke. Okay. Thank you.

15          And with that, I think we can go off the record.

16          Ms. Sawyer. No. We are not going to go off the record  
17 quite yet, because I do think that you may not have an  
18 understanding of that, but there was in the press a threat  
19 that individuals who had been requested to come before the  
20 committee to testify would be served with subpoenas if they  
21 were not going. That was publicly reported.

22          Ms. Clarke. And I think, as Mr. [REDACTED] said, that  
23 his understanding came from the State Department. That's  
24 what we were just trying to clarify.

25          Ms. Sawyer. Okay.



1 Ms. Clarke. Thank you.

2 Ms. Sawyer. Thanks.

3 [Whereupon, at 5:02 p.m., the interview was concluded.]

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[REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Transcript

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 24, 2016 2:22 AM  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Evers, Austin R; Welcher, Allison R; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** RE: Transcript

[REDACTED]  
I clear with a few small corrections. "who was [REDACTED] while I was there," should read "who was [REDACTED] while I was there."

Page 48, last paragraph, line 2,

Page 113, paragraph 3, line 2 ".....about the evacuation in Benghazi" should read "about the evacuation in Tripoli."

[REDACTED]

SBU

This email is UNCLASSIFIED.

## Certificate of Deponent/Interviewee

I have read the foregoing 116 pages, which contain the correct transcript of the answers made by me to the questions therein recorded.

  
Witness Name

3-24-2016  
Date

## EXHIBIT 1

STATE DEPT. - REPRODUCED TO HOUSE SELECT BENGHAZI COMMITTEE.  
 REVIEWED FOR SENSITIVE AND CLASSIFIED INFORMATION PURSUANT TO MOU. NO FOIA WAIVER.

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 23, 2011 7:34 AM  
**To:** DS-IP-NEA  
**Subject:** FW: Benghazi EAC -- December 21, 2011Cretz, Gene A  
**Attachments:** EAC Benghazi 122111 (final).docx

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, December 23, 2011 7:34 AM

Gene A;

; Stevens, John C;

**Subject:** RE: Benghazi EAC -- December 21, 2011Cretz, Gene A

For your information and distribution.

**Benghazi EAC – December 21, 2011**

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: On December 21, the Principal Officer chaired a meeting of US Mission Benghazi's core Emergency Action Committee (EAC). The EAC discussed post's current security posture, including physical security and its movement security procedures. Although the overall security environment has been gradually improving, in light of the reported threat over the holiday period posed by Qadhafi regime loyalists and the current level of Mission security personnel, the EAC recommended improving the physical standards of the current US Mission compound complex, moving all COM personnel into Villas B and C, and leaving Villa A unoccupied. The EAC recommended sustaining the mission's current movement security procedures but will be particularly vigilant and unpredictable, given the more uncertain security environment. END SUMMARY.
2. (SBU) On December 21, the Principal Officer (P/O) chaired a meeting of Mission Benghazi's core Emergency Action Committee (EAC). RSO and IMO also attended the meeting. The EAC discussed the Mission's current security posture, and specifically its physical security and movement security procedures. The EAC discussed recent news of a plot by Qadhafi loyalists to target foreign embassies and oil interests in Benghazi over the Christmas and New Year's holidays. The EAC concluded that Mission Benghazi needs to take immediate steps to improve its physical security over the next few weeks.
3. (SBU) The EAC agreed that all COM personnel should be housed only in Villas B and C until the next EAC is held. With the current threat and the depleted number of security personnel currently at the Mission, it is not possible to provide adequate security for COM personnel in all three villas on the compound on a round-the-clock basis. Condensing all COM residential space to villas B and C allows for at least one DS agent in be in each compound at any given time. The EAC also recommended that RSO Tripoli provide Mission Benghazi two TDY MSD agents for additional security support over the Christmas and New Year's holidays. The EAC also agreed to request additional security support from the TNC in the form of a mounted patrol of four TNC security personnel from 2300 to 0500 hours for the next two weeks.
4. (SBU) The EAC also discussed the pending request to condense the Mission's facility space and make related security enhancements, including improvements to the perimeter walls and emplacement of jersey barriers

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and/or drop arms at Mission gates. The EAC discussed moving-up the timeline for implementing some of these enhancements, and discussed a range of other additional, relatively low-cost security enhancements that should be made in the immediate term while the contraction of the Mission's footprint is considered in Washington. These include the emplacement of concertina/barbed wire on perimeter wall tops and the purchase and emplacement of sand bags to enhance the physical security of villas B and C and areas on these compounds. The EAC also discussed the fact that several areas within the Mission compound are currently unlit, and recommended immediately increasing the number of lights inside the Mission. The EAC also agreed that several observation platforms are needed for the local guard force to have line of sight over perimeter walls. The EAC also recommended the installation of at least one escape hatch in the window security grates in each of the Mission buildings (currently there are none). The EAC recommended submitting a list of prioritized physical security upgrades to be implemented in the very near-term, and will shortly provide these to Washington via separate cover.

5. (SBU) The P/O provided an update on the political situation in Libya, noting the strongly pro-U.S. sentiment among the majority of the population, vocal support for a continued U.S. presence in Benghazi and the increased visibility (and cooperation between) police and military security units in the city. The P/O also led a discussion of what is known about the reported threat by Qadhafi loyalists, and the Mission's efforts to enhance its understanding of the issue. Post has had discussions with other USG sources and local diplomatic missions, and is currently seeking a meeting with Preventive Security (police) to discuss recent developments.
6. (SBU) A follow up EAC will be held on/about 04 January 2012 to reassess the local security and threat environment and discuss appropriate security measures. The mission will also review its established tripwires in the run-up to the next EAC meeting.